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DECEMBER



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CURRENT NOTES

The Newsletter For ATARI Owners

Published By

ACE

The Washington Area
Atari
Computer
Enthusiasts

Special Features

Atari at COMDEX
Atarifest '85
BASIC XL Communicator
RAMDISK on 800XL
Reviews:
ATARIWRITER PLUS
LEARNING PHONE
NEW ATARI MODEM
STWRITER
4xFORTH
GEMINI SG-10

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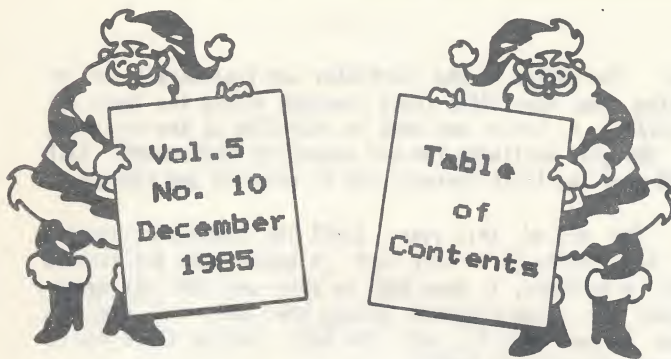
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CURRENT NOTES

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Editorial

With this issue, we close out 1985 and the fifth year of CURRENT NOTES. And what a year it has been. We have seen Atari rise from the ashes to a position where, not only is the company profitable once again, but its prospects for the future get brighter with each passing day. The introduction of the 130XE provided a worthy successor to the old 800 line. But a new 8-bit machine, no matter how good, will not carry any company very far into the future. Atari needed a new flagship and that role has fallen to the 520ST, a computer well equipped to lead Atari back to a stable position in the marketplace. By this time next year, I think you will find that Jack Tramiel will have finally managed to shake the game-computer image off the Atari name and will have established Atari as one of the best choices for a computer in the business, educational, and home markets.

1985 has also been quite a remarkable year for CURRENT NOTES. Every month has seen a steady rise in readership as well as a general upward trend in the size of the newsletter (this issue is 52 pages -- a new record). In February, I printed 850 copies of the newsletter. This month, the total print run will be almost three times that number. The growth in club size plus the addition of several new clubs have combined to increase total club membership from 400 in February to about 900 this month. At the beginning of the year, CURRENT NOTES was received by 30 subscribers outside of the Washington D.C. area. Our subscriber list now totals about 230. Combined WAACE membership, therefore, now exceeds 1,100 and extends to all but 8 states in the union.

One major reason for our expansion this year has been the consistent quality of the newsletter. This summer, John Dvorak of Infoworld named this newsletter as one of the top five in the country. In the Atari community, CURRENT NOTES is being recognized more and more as the no. 1 newsletter for Atari owners. Why such a reputation? It's not the size of the newsletter or the way the articles are formatted. It's the quality of the contents: the articles, tutorials and reviews that appear in these pages. And that quality comes from a superb staff of columnists and writers, many of whom we could not possibly afford if we were paying them, who have given so much of their time and effort over the past year. As editor, I couldn't be prouder of all those individuals who have helped me fill the pages of this newsletter month after month.

However, filling the newsletter is only part of the job of putting it out. There are a lot of administrative tasks that go on behind the scenes. With the expansion in the number of clubs participating in CURRENT NOTES last year, it seemed that it would be better if the "publisher" of the newsletter were not just one of the clubs. Therefore, I created WAACE, the Washington Area Atari Computer Enthusiasts, and opened a bank account in the name of CURRENT NOTES. Instead of just splitting expenses, each club was expected to pay a fixed price for the issues of the newsletter sent to its members. A scheme was devised to allow any club that wanted to offset its costs to do so by participating in the advertising or sales of the newsletter.

The editor of the newsletter was responsible for assuring that newsletter costs remained within the funds allocated. A letter was sent to each club at the beginning of the year outlining the new operating environment. Each club gave its tacit approval and we were off and running.

For all of this year, WAACE has consisted primarily of me. Although I have kept in touch with the various club presidents, I have had to make any and all operational decisions required during the year. I couldn't turn to any specific body for help because there was no formal structure to WAACE.

Initially, there really weren't many decisions to be made. But as the year has gone on, the administrative burden has grown considerably as has the importance of deciding just where we are heading. Most readers aren't aware of it, but CURRENT NOTES expenses for a single month are now in the area of \$2,000. That's a lot of bookkeeping to keep straight as is our mailing list of well over 1,000 names. All of the individual clubs have officers and appointed helpers to help carry on the activities of the club. WAACE has none of that. It can't very well have any of that until it formally exists.

Therefore, I have called together a committee, composed of one representative from each club appointed by the club president, that is working on the development of a charter and organizational structure for WAACE. At the moment, the primary function of WAACE is to publish CURRENT NOTES. But what should the price structure be? What should we charge clubs? What should we charge advertisers? Where should any revenues earned by the newsletter go? Questions like these should be decided by some institutional body that somehow reflects the interests of the members in each of the participating clubs. The exact makeup of the "body" is one of the things this committee will have to wrestle with.

Publishing a newsletter is clearly an activity where economies of scale mean that a central coordinating body can do the task better than any individual club. There may, however, be other activities that can also benefit from central coordination. Suppose, for example, we had a central WAACE library. Any new disks added to the library by any club would automatically become available to all other clubs in the group. How about disk purchases? Buying blank disks in lots of 1,000 yields a much better discount than most small clubs could every hope to get. Questions like these are things the representatives of the individual clubs can provide answers for.

It is my hope that over the holiday period, a consensus can be reached on how to structure WAACE. The proposal arrived at by this committee will then be taken to each participating club for ratification or revision. The cooperation that the Washington area clubs have shown in working together to produce this newsletter has inspired clubs in several areas of the country to explore the possibility of doing the same thing. Perhaps in developing the WAACE structure, we can continue to set an example of how Atari clubs can work together for the common benefit of all their members.

*Happy Holidays!
Joe Waters*

Letters to the Editor

Thank You Everyone!

Joe,

Well, here it is, November 11, two days after the Atarifest and I miss the excitement already!

I'm pretty sure that a lot of Atari users in the Washington area will remember November 9, 1985 as the day we put the Washington area on Atari's 'map' of extremely viable market areas.

How can they, Atari, show signs of being ignorant of our area when the first Atari-computer-only show draws upwards of two-thousand (2000!) people. My low estimate of 400 (in case of low interest) was passed way before noon! And I was elated when the high estimate of 1500 was passed by 2:30 PM. I don't think anyone could have foreseen the great interest shown by everyone at the show.

First of all, I would like to thank EVERYONE! To Georgia Weatherhead and Diana Burdt, the co-coordinators, a great job (if your husbands are still talking to you, tell them thanks!). To Marilyn at the Fairfax County Office of Adult and Community Education, your help and the school facilities were tremendous. Joe, thanks for all the great publicity offered by the famous CURRENT NOTES and the WAACE group. Jim Parks, John Marable and Greg Black, the site coordinators, everything went very well. The area user groups that participated, thanks to all for greeting all newcomers with info. and a smile! (Many newcomers complimented us on a job well done.) And last, but definitely NOT the least, we want to thank the 70 or so people that helped during set-up, operations, and clean-up. Without you, this show would not have worked!!!

Of course, to all the area stores and those that supplied materials and support for this endeavor, we thank you!!! OSS, ICD, Xlent Software, Fairfax High School Band Boosters, CompuGreet, HAL Systems, Diskcovery, L&Y Electronics, Black Patch Systems, Chuck Levin's Washington Music Center, Applied Computer Associates, Fairfax Computer Products, PC Ads, STS Video Supply, and any I may have missed(?). Your participation helped make this show a huge success. But please, don't hurt yourself patting yourself on the back...

By using the resources available to us, we drew a great variety of people, both non-owners and owners. Experienced and extreme novices. Programmers and canned-software users. And of course everything in-between. It was great listening to everyone exchange a lot of information to anyone and everyone. I think that this exchange of information is typical of Atari users worldwide! I also consider the definite desire to learn as a typical attribute of the Atari user.

These last two ideas were the main reason for my wanting to push for something like Atarifest, along with the idea of showing Atari the viability of the metro area's market. After the show, I'm sure lots of people now agree with me.

I met and enjoyed talking with lots of people from both near and far. We had people from Pittsburgh, Harrisburg, Norfolk, New Jersey, West Virginia, Western Maryland and who knows where else come to this first Atarifest.

Many people have already called to tell me that they are now convinced that my being optimistic about the new Atari could be the way to go. Well, since I now have both the 130XE and 520ST, you can just try and convince me otherwise. But don't waste your breath.

Well, again, thanks to everyone that came, helped and/or supported this FIRST Atarifest. Anybody ready for one next year? Atarifest '86. That has a nice ring, doesn't it?!

Terry White, Chairman
Atarifest '85.

A Vote for HabaWrite

Greetings:

....I am writing this letter on my ST using "Habawrite", and after a day or two of learning the ins and outs of it, I recommend it to anyone who wants a Good Word Processor for the ST.

The user interface is well thought out, and the few places that are clumsy are not that inconvenient. I am sure that Haba has put out an advertising flier listing all the features.

I have used hundreds (well, at least 10 or 20) word processors ranging from CP/M's ED through UNIX's EMACS, and Habawriter is now my second favorite. Of course my favorite word processor is the one I wrote for myself, but haven't ported to the ST.

Habawriter IS NOT a program editor, although it can be used as such. It IS a Word Processor, and has more than enough features for your average ST owner.

Features that are missing (or hidden) are things like page headers and footers, multicolumn output and proportional spacing. Also, the only printer configuration file supplied is for the EPSON printers.

I would suggest that people go to the local computer store and play with the demo copy to see if it fits them before buying. Anyway -- gotta run....

Steve McIntosh
Long Beach, CA

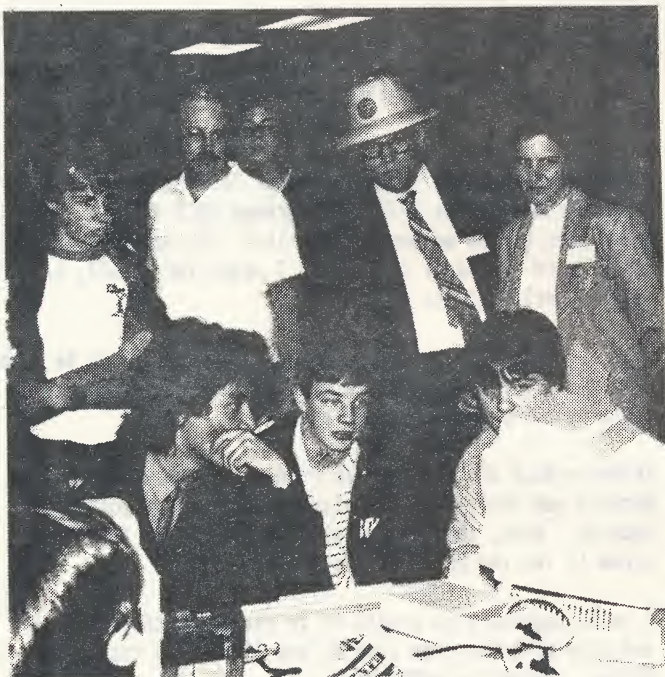
ATARI Fans Feast at Fest

by Jack Holtzhauer

I couldn't believe it! Fairfax High's parking lot was half full when I pulled in at 9:30 am. All these folks couldn't possibly be wasting a perfectly good Saturday to attend NOVATARI's AtariFest. Could they? The event hadn't received all that much publicity, had it? Are there more than 500 or so real Atari fans in the entire Metro area? Could half of them be here? Already? The show's not due to start for another half-hour. I couldn't believe it.

I grabbed my Washington Post, cuppa coffee and bag of Hardie's biscuits and started walking towards the main entrance. I hadn't taken more than a couple of steps when the sonorous voice of a public address announcer wafted across the parking lot from the nearby school stadium -- "BROGAN CARRIED THE BALL TO THE COUGARS 32. BROUGHT DOWN BY NUMBER 66 -- BILLY BOB PLUCKETT. FIRST AND TEN, VIKINGS!". Ah ha! That explains it! These cars don't belong to owners of an \$89 computer and it's new XE and ST cousins. They belong to good 'ole red-blooded American football fans. What better place to be on a bright Saturday Fall morning than at the local school field, before heading home to lean back in the recliner and watch the NCAA on TV, a six-pack within easy reach. That's more like it -- puzzle solved!

But wait a minute! I'm not the only one walking towards the building. There are several family groups in front of me and some other stragglers coming from the parking lot. And up ahead a couple of guys are unloading computer gear from vans parked near the main entrance. Maybe there will be a few folks here, after all. Let's wait and see.



A crowd watches the ST do its thing.

Hmm. Lots of activity in the long hallway leading to the cafeteria where the Fest was to be held. Folks pushing handcarts to and fro, those on the way in piled high with computer stuff. And inside the cafeteria there must be fifty people. A mixed bag ranging from little kids to grandmas, all busily at work preparing exhibit areas -- running electrical lines, setting up computers, stringing cable, stacking merchandise, hanging posters and signs. They even look organized -- could they really know what they're doing? Maybe this thing will fly!

Uh oh! Here comes Georgia Weatherhead! I remember her from the last NOVATARI meeting where she was seeking volunteers to work at the Fest. She's heading right for me with that "I need just one more" glint in her eye. I quickly put on my "I'm on my appointed rounds" expression, and steered a sharp change in course towards the refreshment room. I sat down and read the sport section while I ate my white-bagged breakfast, figuring it would probably be safe to go back into the main room in a couple of minutes.

It was, but there must have been two hundred people in there then, standing a couple deep in front of the exhibit tables strung around the room's perimeter. And they looked like they were having fun.

Palmer Pyle was on the PA system giving away the first batch of door prizes. He was to do this every half-hour throughout the day -- dozens of Atari T-shirts, back packs, and pith helmets; game cartridges donated by Black Patch Systems and Applied Computer Associates; free subscriptions to PC-ADS; more games donated by NOVATARI; and NOVATARI's grand prize -- an 800XL. And free for the taking -- a couple hundred CENTIPEDE mobiles and another several hundred ATARI game buttons. Lots of goodies for everyone.

The crowd must be at least another hundred stronger now. Time to take a walk around and see what there was to see before things really got out of hand. Why not start near the door and work my way around the room?

Dave Meyer, his daughter Heather, and a couple of other cohorts were working the RECREATION/GAMING table. Dave was running a video tape featuring a number of popular Atari games -- Star Raiders, Pacman, Astro Chase, etc., while Heather was putting some others thru their paces on her 800XL. M. Evans Brooks, NOVATARI's busy disk librarian and CURRENT NOTES columnist, was hard at work at another console demonstrating some of SSI's vargame simulations. A real hit at this booth was a video tape covering Neal Harris' recent visit to NOVATARI and another showing Activenture's CD ROM demonstration. Folks were to stand four-deep watching that one all day.

Next door at the LANGUAGES/UTILITIES exhibit Jim Stevenson and Ed Seward were demonstrating ACTION, BASICXL, PASCAL, etc., and answering questions regarding the features of these popular languages. They were



NOVATARI did a booming business both in new memberships (42 for the day) and in library sales.

swamped with questions regarding LOGO posed by the many teachers drawn to the Fest by publicity generated within the Fairfax County school system. Jim was also busy selling NOVATARI's fine NPX disk programs, Deep Blue "C" being a particular favorite.

Next in line was the 520ST showcase area. I could see Evan Wallace standing back there behind the crowd, but I couldn't belly-up close enough to see what was going on. Maybe on the next circuit. (I never did make it. Somebody said you needed a visa.)

On to the PRODUCTIVITY exhibit where Gary Purinton and several others were manning the store. The hit here? ATARIWRITER PLUS, received just the night before from our favorite computer maker. They were trying to demo PLUS while reading the manual at the same time. They hadn't even seen it till after the show opened. At another console, Bob Waterfield was running tutorials on Synapse's SYN-SERIES of applications software - CALC, FILE+, etc. By the time word got around that PLUS was on display, the area was grid-locked for the rest of the day.

Just around the corner was the EDUCATIONAL area under the charge of Dianna Burdt, Marvin Bleiberg, et al. A covey of XL's was running all sorts of educational fare ranging from pre-school to college level material. Marvin was even using his Atari to display graphs relating to pharmacokinetics. Come on! I can't believe you've never heard that term before? Everybody knows it relates to the "study of the bodily absorption, distribution, metabolism and excretion of drugs" (source: Web. New Collegiate Dictionary - 9th ed). Had it right on the tip of your tongue, didn't you? Doesn't it strike you as strange that

our favorite "game machine" would be used for such an esoteric purpose? In any case, Marvin later told me he'd had a good day. He ran into a several graduate medical students who had come up to the Fest from Richmond. They not only liked his graphs, they even understood them! Small world!

The last exhibit table featured the ATARI's music capability. Working in conjunction with Jim Heard of Fairfax Computer Products, Steve Steinberg had a couple of computers up and running various 8-bit music programs. But, the hit here was a Casio synthesizer hooked up to the 520ST's MIDI interface. This demo drew capacity crowds all day. Jim was also showing off the ST's graphic capabilities using Atari's "freeware" NEOCHROME program. He even brought in a professional artist to show folks how easy it was to produce attractive graphics screens. I'm told the AMIGA lost a couple of sales here.

One of the busiest areas at the Fest was NOVATARI's own table where, while Earl Lilley, Linda Wood and other volunteers weren't signing up new members, they were doing a land-office business selling the group's library disks. The folks from AURA, the only other local users' group present, were also putting on a pretty good show. It looked to me as if their participation was well worth their effort.

Vendors, vendors everywhere! A dozen or so. HAL-COM was there demonstrating their popular COMPUTER-EYES package. Mike and Linda Barnes from XLENT Software with their fine "printware" products. COMPU-GREETINGS -- computer formatted greeting cards. The publishers of PC-ADS. Local retailers -- PORTSIDE PC, CAL COM, L&Y Electronics, Black Patch Systems, STS Video, Applied Computer Associates, GAFAL Systems, and, as previously mentioned, Fairfax Computer Products. Probably some others I missed. I had a chance to talk to several retailers after the show. They appeared to be more than pleased by the business the Fest generated, both on-site and follow-up. Willing to try again? You betcha. One even had a good suggestion for the next FEST. Why not set up a "spotlight" area -- a section with plenty of room where demos of "hot items" could be scheduled? Maybe in a hourly rotating cycle of presentations? Items such as a music synthesizer hooked-up to the ST's MIDI interface, COMPUTER-EYES, Activenture's video on the CD ROM, etc. Makes sense, doesn't it?

I closed out my stay by spending an hour or so sitting-in for Joe Waters at the CURRENT NOTES table, selling back-issues, answering questions, and such. We also had Atari's new XM301 modem on display there. The three most frequent comments?

- 1) Jeez, how did they make it so small?
- 2) Can you use it to down-load?
- 3) So, what else is new?

I didn't have the answer for the first one. "I'm pretty sure" was my response to the second. I never did get a chance to look at the documentation. I directed those looking for other new Atari products to the PRODUCTIVITY area where AW PLUS was on display and also mentioned that demo versions of SILENT BUTLER and HOME PLANE-

TARIUM had also come in from Atari the night before. I wished them lots of luck 'cause I had missed both on my first go-around.

I never did find SILENT BUTLER, but on my way out I ran across the HOME PLANETARIUM demo. If I understood what I saw, I think it allows you to pick any spot on the globe, choose your direction and angle of view, and the program will display the starfield for you for any date since the dawn of time. Solar tracking, eclipses and plotting the progress of Halley's comet are also possible. You can also use your joystick to zoom in and out, just as if you were using a variable focal length telescope. Just the thing for star-gazers or budding astronomers.

I enjoyed my visit. I had a chance to talk to members of all the local users' groups and some others who had come from as far South as Georgia and the Carolinas; as far North as Pittsburg; others from Jersey and New York. Most felt the trip more than worthwhile -- better than similar events they had attended. I guess by the time I left, at about 1:00 pm, over fifteen hundred visitors must have filtered thru.

Terry White is NOVATARI's publicity chairman. This event was his brainchild. Terry, Georgia Weatherhead, Diana Burdt, Marvin Bleiberg, Gary Purinton, and the rest of the folks from NOVATARI put it together. And it worked. It worked well. Everybody take a bow! Better yet, encore! Next time let's spread sawdust on the floor and have balloons! Elephants! Dancing girls?

THE ATARI LEARNING PHONE

A First Look

by Dennis McCormick

The Learning Phone Package allows Atari owners to access a subset of a large bank of educational software known as PLATO. In addition, the HOMELINK service by Control Data offers a combination of more traditional activities often available from information services.

The Learning Phone system consists of a cartridge, a 76 page users guide, several small brochures and free signup certificate. The system requires an Atari computer (XE/XL/400/800 with min 16K RAM) and a modem (835, 1030, XM301, RS-232 modem via 850 interface, or MPP-1000C).

The cartridge contains a terminal emulator program, designed to send PLATO commands normally issued by a Control Data terminal. It also performs a number of graphics functions in emulating a PLATO terminal. The touch screen function is emulated using the Atari joystick. The cartridge modem program is rudimentary, requiring the user to dial the HOMELINK number using a telephone, wait for the modem signal from the host computer and hang up the phone so that the user's modem can begin operation. A screen dump to a printer can be made at any time but there seems to be no provision to save an online session to disk.

Offerings on the HOMELINK system are selected from menus. The centerpiece of the PLATO system is a library of almost 600 education programs and games. A brochure with the package lists the titles of programs available on the system. The following topics are covered (# of titles in parens): astronomy (5), aviation (2), biology (11), business (14), chemistry (20), computer science (102), consumer credit (4), games (40), general interest (11), language (38), math (39), elementary math (55), medicine (3), music (2), nutrition (16), physics (12), PLATO topics (20), safety (11), simulations (6), social science (3), spelling (3), youth (19). A group of some 70 titles is designed for children 4-7 years old. Sample titles include aviation ground school, population genetics, fortran, PL/I, French, Spanish, Boolean algebra, linear momentum in collisions, preventing fires, population growth and projection, ...

The HOMELINK system offers online word processing and text storage and well as a graphics processor with the ability to print copies of any graphics produced. Documents developed using the word processor can be sent to other users via HOMELINK's electronic mail system. User storage can be managed while online. The system also offers a series of Notefiles similar to the Forums of CompuServe. Users can list topics of notes left by other users and select notes to read. This is the equivalent of "browse" and "read" functions in CompuServe. The HOMELINK Notefiles system is not as powerful as CompuServe's equivalent but appears to perform the minimum necessary functions. Of course, users may upload their own notes to the Notefiles of HOMELINK. Users may access the directory of HOMELINK users, learn another user's address, and issue a page for that user. When (if) the other user answers the page, the two can engage in a two way conversation via HOMELINK. Conference facilities do not appear to be available.

The system is available 6pm - 4am weekdays, 6am - 4am Saturdays, and 6am-12pm Sundays and holidays (EST). The card enclosed in the Learning Phone package waives the first year's annual fee (\$25) and offers one free hour of usage. Subsequent billing is at \$7.75/hr (300 or 1200 baud). Online storage is billed at \$.17/day for 19K byte blocks. At this time, billing can only be made to major credit cards. Local phone numbers are available in more than 150 cities. (The DC area is served by 300 and 1200 baud numbers in suburban Maryland). For more information, contact PLATO Homelink Customer Service, P.O. Box 1305, McLean, VA, 22102.

Classified Ads

FOR SALE: ATARI 800XL computer, 1050 disk drive, 1010 tape unit, 1027 letter quality printer, joy stick, Atariwriter word processor, Synfile+ database, Syncalc spreadsheet, Touch typing, Missile Command, ET Phone Home, Galaxian, Canyon Climber. Asking \$445. Call David McCracken, 703-471-4560.

THE ATARI XM301 MODEM:

First Impressions

Reviewed by Mark Brown

It has finally arrived: the Atari XM301 Direct-connect, auto-answer/auto-dial 300 baud modem that Atari promised! It was to be the telecommunications version of "Power without the price" and it succeeds! Almost.

Eagerly plunking down the full retail price, \$49.95, at L&Y Electronics, I couldn't wait to get home to try it out. I literally tore the box apart in anticipation, and I wasn't disappointed!

What I found was nothing short of fantastic; on top was a 50 page manual for the modem and its included software, XE-Term (written by Russ Wetmore, the author of HomeTerm), free connect time on Compuserve, Dow Jones Retrieval service, and the Official Airline Guide and sizeable discounts on the Source and Knowledge-Index. The clearly labeled disk for XE-Term was next, followed by the usual warranty card (limited warranty for 90 days) and the modem itself.

The modem is in a plastic box a mere six inches by three inches by one inch. It is simplicity itself; a single input-output cable protrudes out the back, a single telephone jack gives away the box's purpose, and a single LED is next to the words "Atari XM301 Modem". There is no power cord to worry about, it draws power directly from the computer, and no extra ports or switches. There is not even an on/off switch; if the computer is on, so is the modem.

Its simplicity gives rise to simple installation; find a convenient place for it (you can actually hide it, there is no real reason to keep it in sight other than to show it off), plug the serial input/output (I/O) cord onto the end of your I/O chain, and plug a telephone cord into the modem. In less than a minute I was ready to test out the modem program that comes with it: XE-Term!

So I booted up the disk given to me. I waited ... I heard beeps showing that it was loading so I waited ... I waited some more...Finally the main menu came up! XE-Term is a very large program! At the top of the screen I was told I had 14752 bytes in my buffer, and a functions menu (cleverly labeled "Functions menu") told me I had several options. I could send or receive XMODEM, capture or upload text, go to a file utilities sub-menu, see a disk directory, go to DOS, or dial a number. I pressed the "D" key to dial a number.

Lo and behold a menu popped up in the middle of the screen, partially overlaying the old! Macintosh like! I was told I could type in a telephone number from the keyboard, log on (a mysterious mode to those who don't read the manual), set the auto-answer mode, and change from tone to pulse dialing. I could also type the numbers one through five to dial one of five programmable numbers. not bad! I quickly programmed all five numbers to local boards, tediously being asked if I wanted to save the configuration to disk each time (so next session you'll have the numbers back), and dialed one up.

Experimenting with XE-Term, I found out that most everything works beautifully; dialing telephone numbers is no problem, capturing and uploading text is easy, and the file utilities are standard and useful. The only problem is that I couldn't get it to upload or download using the Xmodem protocol. Using the local bulletin boards in the Washington DC area, I found that when I downloaded something, I got a file the exact length as the one sent, but I didn't get the same file. Somewhere in there bytes regularly got added, deleted, or changed; I'm not sure which, all I know is that it didn't work. I couldn't upload a file to another computer, period. The attempt was made, but errors occurred every time, aborting the upload.

I decided it was time to read the documentation to see if I was doing something wrong. It seemed that I was doing what the manual called for, but I just couldn't get it to work. The manual, however, did show that the modem had technical specifications on a file on the disk. So I glanced over it (copying it from the file to the printer) and it looked vaguely familiar. As a matter of fact it almost mirrored the "Unleashing the 1030 Modem" article in the August '85 Antic magazine. Was this modem 1030 compatible?

Yes! I tried many terminal programs written for the 1030 and those that require the handler to be booted up separately worked great! (The methods for loading up the handler differ from the XM301 and 1030). The faulty XE-Term was replaced with Amodem 7.1. Uploads and downloads worked perfectly and I have been satisfied ever since.

Now for the troubles. The XM301 promised much and delivered most, but nothing is perfect.

As explained earlier XE-Term is a nice terminal program, but nothing to brag about when compared to some of the public domain programs. The fact that I couldn't get it to upload or download added to its barely adequate five number telephone directory making XE-Term pale in comparison to some of the public domain programs out. Thankfully, most of those programs will work on the XM301, alleviating that problem.

The XM301's simplicity also makes it a pain; you have to buy another phone cord and possibly a phone line splitter if you plan to use a telephone with the modem. The fact that it has to be at the end of the serial chain means that it can't be used with the old cassette recorders (a genuine concern for some) and means a real mess if you add something like another disk drive to the middle of the chain.

And the worst complaint of all; the auto-answer does not work. No amount of trying could get the little box to answer the phone. Those of you intending to set up bulletin boards with this low cost modem should wait a while until this particular bug is ironed out.

Summary. So in conclusion, I would have to say that the XM301 is an excellent buy. As it is, it is the best value in modems on the market; \$49.95 buys a lot of power. However, if you don't need a new modem right away, it may pay to wait a little while until some of the problems I encountered are ironed out. Patience is a virtue.

ATARIWRITER PLUS: A Sneak Preview

by Jack Holtzhauer

The day before NOVATARI's AtariFest, Joe Waters opened a package from the Atari Corp. Inside were a number of goodies Atari had forwarded for demo purposes at NOVATARI's affair, including a copy of ATARIWRITER PLUS. Joe asked me to do a short "first impressions" article on it, so I picked it up yesterday and am using it as this is being written.

ATARIWRITER PLUS, first announced at last Winter's Vegas CES, has been a long time in coming. Has it been worth the wait? Probably, although it may fall short of some folks' expectations. How does it differ from the current version of this popular word processor? Functionally both products are almost the same. If you're familiar with ATARIWRITER, using PLUS will be a snap. Major differences? For 130XE owners, memory capacity has been increased to 46.5K - enough for about 32 double-spaced pages. There are several other new bells and whistles including, to my personal delight, software supported double-column printing.

Inasmuch as this is not supposed to be a full-blown review and most readers are familiar with the original product, I'll just concentrate on differences between the two. First of all, PLUS is disk-based. The program disk is double-sided, the standard version on the face and the XE version on the flip side. A second disk containing the PROOFREADER dictionary is also supplied (more on this later). The 66-page manual is well written but lacks an index. No cue card is supplied, but all commands are listed in a "quick reference" section in the rear of the manual.

Main Menu and I/O Operations: The main menu screen will be familiar to all ATARIWRITER users, but two new functions allow you to load the PROOFREADER and MAILMERGE modules (more later). You can also get a directory listing on both drive one and two. Score one! And guess what? The filenames on those multi-file disks don't scroll off the top of the screen while you're trying to read them. The first 38 files are listed in a double-column format. The rest are accessed with tap on the RETURN key. Score another! And at the bottom of the directory screen is a sub-menu allowing you to load, delete, or save a file while the directory is right there in front of you. Score another!

Disk format commands can be directed to either drive one or two (Atari's enhanced density is forced if the system is booted with a 1050 drive). By the way, all I/O commands now accept wild-cards. Score two more!

The only other new feature on the menu screen is the global format function. When accessed it shows all the default formatting settings - top margin, type font, justification, etc. You know, all those funny symbols you're used to seeing on the top line of the edit screen. You can make any desired changes then and there. Score another!

When first accessing the PRINT command from the menu screen, you are allowed to choose printer-drivers from any one of seven Atari models (825, 1025, 1027, 1020, 1029, and the new XMM 801 and XDM 121), the Epson FX-80, IDS Microprism 480, Juki 6100, or a custom driver created with the printer-driver module (see below). Score another!

You are also allowed to "print" to devices other than your printer - to either drive or to RS232 ports R1 thru R4.

Edit Screen and text entry? Pretty much the same, but there are a couple of very helpful new features. PLUS allows you to format the edit screen up to 249 columns wide. Using elite font? Set your columns to 96. Condensed? Set them to 132. 'Course you can only view 40 columns at a time - as you advance towards the right edge of the screen the text scrolls off towards the left. Even so, this is a boon to anyone who has tried to columnize text using the current version. Score one! You can also switch from INSERT to TYPEOVER mode for making corrections. Score another!

Cursor Movement: Only one change here. PLUS allows you to advance or backspace by word, but the two-fingered, two-handed keystroke required (SELECT/LEFT or RIGHT ARROW) is awkward. Score a half-point.

Block Operations: Three new functions. PLUS allows you to alphabetize a list of words or phrases. This might be useful in some situations (index listings, etc.). Score a half point. PLUS also allows you to obtain a word count on your entire text or any portion thereof. Score one! You are also allowed to SAVE a designated block of text. Score another half point. Other block functions - DELETE, MOVE and DUPLICATE are essentially unchanged. The failsafe buffer in the XE versions approximates 8K; in the non-XE version to the remaining free bytes.

Search and Replace: About the same, but keystroke sequences are different. You may search for a control character, use "?" as a wildcard in your search string, search upward from the current cursor position, and search without having to respond to a REPLACE query. Score one!

Type Fonts and Embedded Printer Control Codes: The current version of ATARIWRITER provides the user with three "default" type fonts - pica, condensed and proportional - those accessible thru the "6" command. PLUS adds three more - elite, superscript and subscript, the latter two claimed to be useable only with Atari's new XMM801 printers (they produce condensed super/subscript on my Epson compatible Panasonic 1092, just as intended). Both superscript and subscript are, of course, still available using the SELECT/UP-DOWN ARROW sequences. Actually, PLUS allows you to set up as many as nine "default" fonts using its printer-driver utility (see below). An "emphasized" or "bold" command is provided, and you can access the international character set on your printer, if it has one. As in the original version, embedded printer control codes



are accepted. Score three for the new "default" fonts and one more for the other new touches!

Print Formatting: All the standard print formatting features remain unchanged - centering text, headers, justification, line spacing, page numbering, automatic section heading, etc., etc. But PLUS adds one additional feature I mentioned above - software supported double column printing. As far as I'm concerned, this feature is worth the cost of upgrading! And both columns are presented side-by-side on the preview screen. Score several!

Memory Management -- 130XE: As I mentioned above, the 130XE version of PLUS can handle 46K+. The program achieves this by bank-switching three blocks of text each handling 15,872 bytes, the amount shown as "free" when you first access the edit screen. As you approach the capacity of the first bank of 15K+ you must issue a command to "force" the switch to the second bank. The switch is not done automatically, although SAVING from and LOADING to all three banks is handled by the program.

File Compatibility: ATARIWRITER PLUS files are compatible with those produced by the original version and, absent control codes, with text files produced by other word processors compatible with DOS 2.0 or DOS 2.5.

Printer Driver Module: PLUS provides a printer-driver module which allows you to construct a custom driver for your specific printer. You're required to input all those nasty control codes needed to toggle your printer's carriage return, backspace, reverse line feed, etc., functions. But it's easy to use and you can identify as many as nine different type styles using this feature, all of which can be accessed using the "Gn" command. For example, you can set-up "G3" to be emphasized double-strike pica, "G4" to be condensed superscript, "G5" to be NLQ elite, and so forth. Score several!

Mail Merge Module: This module allows you to set-up a simple database which can be accessed from the main program. It can be useful in printing form letters, address labels, etc. You can use the "default" format or construct a custom version, but both are limited to 255 fifteen-field records. Although records can be deleted or edited, they cannot be sorted or accessed on a random basis. You can only page forward, or page back.

By inserting an OPTION/M (replaces the old OPTION/INSERT) key sequence anywhere in your text, followed by the number of the database field desired, data can be extracted from the database and automatically inserted into your text material during the printing process. Score a couple more!

Proofreader Module: The PROOFREADER module is loaded from the Main Menu and utilizes a separate dictionary disk containing some 36,000 words. It can be used to check the spelling of most common words in your text material, providing you the option of making corrections as needed, or send a list of possible errors to your printer. You can also access the dictionary when you're not certain how to spell a given word, although some disk switching is involved. Making an inquiry on the string "fil", for exam-

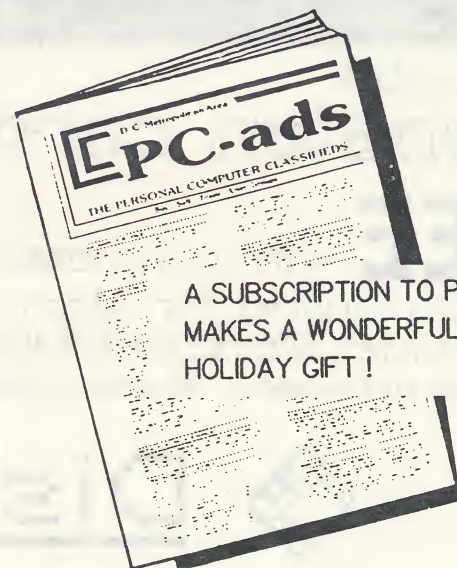
ple, gave me a list of fifty-five words beginning with those three letters. How quickly does PROOFREADER function and what types of words does it fail to recognize? I've just asked for a list of possible errors in the preceding 1280 words in this article. It took six minutes to complete the process and gave me a list of sixty-three possible errors, many of which were repetitive occurrences. Among the words it didn't like were ATARIWRITER, filenames, keystroke, pica and, surprisingly, font.

The PROOFREADER module also allows you to construct a personal file of frequently used words not found in the standard dictionary - words like ATARIWRITER, filenames, keystroke, pica and font, which can be added to the current database. Now, if they would only add a thesaurus. Score five.

This "short" article has gone on for nearly two pages. It's time to sum up. There's no question that AW PLUS is a major improvement over the original version. Its new I/O, editing, formatting and printing features, combined with its built-in spelling checker, mail merge and printer-driver utilities make it an attractive package if properly priced (under \$50.00?). How does it stack up with BI's PAPERCLIP? I've never used the latter, but from what I've read AW+ is probably not as full-featured. But, AW+ does have one thing going for it. Very simply stated - it's easy to use! If marketed properly by software vendors, that single consideration should sway many a potential buyer.

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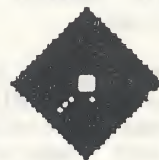
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"You've known us since 1979."

ANTIC's COMDEX REPORT

by Jack Powell

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Tramiel Puts CD ROM on Hold

November 21, 1985. Las Vegas, NV -- Jack Tramiel, president of Atari, told ANTIC today that Atari will not release a CD ROM player for the ST until manufacturer's prices drop. He saw no release of the massive storage peripheral for the ST in the immediate future. CD ROM players by Phillips and Hitachi were on display for IBM and Apple II, priced \$1,500 and up, at the Grolier booth, publishers of the first and still only CD ROM software, the Electronic Encyclopedia (\$199). CD ROM on the Atari ST is to be demonstrated at the MGM Grand tonight, but not by Atari.

Tramiel, when asked about the noticeable absence of the CD ROM at the Atari exhibit, said that until he could find lower prices for the basic driver mechanism, he would not sell the machine. "I will never release it for higher than \$600," he said.

He went on to say that consumers are used to paying \$199 for CD audio digital disk players. Why should they pay \$1000 for the same mechanism just because it's a CD ROM? "I'm definitely not willing to lose money."

Tramiel felt that the CD ROM would be a big boost to the personal computer industry in general, but he felt no compulsion to be the first company to release it. When asked again when he thought he might have one ready, he replied, "You'll have to guess and I'll have to know."

Tramiel also avoided setting a specific date for when the GEM operating system for the Atari ST would be placed in ROM. But he said it was a "matter of days, not months." Also, despite the current disagreement between Apple Computer and Digital Research regarding the appearance of the GEM desktop, Tramiel stated the ST desktop would not alter in appearance. Atari, he said, was working with DRI and their attorneys and he saw no problems down the line. DRI, Tramiel said, has indemnified Atari.

Several hard disks were being used at the Atari exhibits -- including at the ANTIC display. Richard Frick, Atari Marketing Director - Software, was handing them out to the exhibitors like candy. ANTIC Marketing Director, Gary Yost, described his experience adding the hard disk to his demonstration system. "It was incredible. I brought the whole thing up and partitioned it in fifteen minutes. It usually takes an hour to do this on an IBM. I moved ten disks of our demonstration files to the hard disk with no problem."

According to Tramiel, hard disks are currently being shipped to developers and he expects them to be available to the end user by the first quarter of 1986. No firm price has been set, but he hoped to keep it under \$600. (The night before, Sam Tramiel told a group of over forty

developers that a \$699 20-megabyte hard disk would be shipping to retailers by the last week of December, or the first day of January.)

Tramiel was very pleased by the reception his ST was receiving, both at COMDEX as well as globally. "We have over 1,000 developers worldwide." He also said he expects total sales of the ST, by year-end to reach 100,000, worldwide. Sales, he said, are strongest in Germany. He asked him what he attributed that to, and he said, "Obviously, the Germans are smarter buyers."

Tramiel was also proud of the fact that the 520 ST had become, during the month of October, the number one selling personal computer in Germany. In addition, a poll of 12 European computer magazines hailed the 520 ST as the PC of the year.

Borland Buys ST's

Sig Hartman, President of Software at Atari, confirmed that Borland International, developers of the phenomenally successful Turbo Pascal, had just purchased three 520 ST's. "Borland is committed to write software on the ST," said Hartman.

A top Atari official at one of COMDEX's many nocturnal parties, told us that Philippe Kahn, president of Borland, after returning from the October Munich Computer show, went directly to Atari and handed over a check for three ST's. Hartman went on to say that the important thing Atari was demonstrating at COMDEX was the obvious show of support by third-party software developers. And the forty-plus developers at COMDEX were just the tip of the iceberg, "We have more than 800 development systems out right now."

Michael Katz, ex-president and CEO of EPYX software, and Atari's brand new president of the Entertainment and Electronics Division, described Atari's upcoming Christmas advertising strategy.

Starting December 1st, each ST sold will include a free giveaway package of five pieces of software, to include BASIC, LOGO, a game called Megaroids, a word processor and a database. The identity of the last two items has not yet been decided upon.

More importantly, Atari plans to blitz the Christmas advertising scene with a "co-operative" advertising campaign. Advertising print pieces have been designed by Atari to be made available to local retailers for the Christmas season. Atari will place the ads in some publications, but the same advertisements will be available to retailers for local placement. During a period from December 1st to December 31st, Atari Corp. will reimburse up to 80% of the dealer's cost of placing these ST ads.



ST World

by Joe Waters

COMDEX '85

A lot of potential ST owners have chosen to sit on the sidelines waiting for the appearance of appropriate software before actually jumping on the ST bandwagon. Well, friends, it looks like you can now jump safely. Atari devoted its floor space at the massive, seventh annual COMDEX (COMputer Dealer EXpo) almost entirely to dispelling the notion that there is no software available for the new 520ST computer. I counted about three dozen different companies proudly displaying their newly released (or soon to be released) ST products. When Santa Clause brings that new ST for Christmas, your biggest problem is not going to be finding programs, it's going to be deciding which software to buy!

I am writing this column while COMDEX is still in progress (CURRENT NOTES is already late in getting to the printer) so the whole story of this year's show isn't complete yet. In addition, I simply don't have the space to cover in any detail all the companies and programs that were on display. So let me just pass on some general observations and a quick overview of some of the products I was particularly impressed with.

The thrust of ST development work is centering on the ST as a personal productivity machine. Although there were some delightful new entertainment programs being shown, these were in the minority. Programmers will find an abundance of computer languages and programming aids. Business users will find many variants of their standard tools (word processors, spreadsheets, and databases). Other professional users, such as accounts, engineers, architects, etc., will be delighted to see software coming out with their specific needs in mind. The ST is simply too powerful to be used only for entertainment.

Not all ST products are being released by bright young programmers seeking to make their fortune. A very large number of programs are being introduced by mature software companies that are porting their programs over to the ST or developing whole new programs to take advantage of the ST's unique features. You still won't see some of the higher-priced companies from the IBM world (Lotus, Ashton-Tate, Microsoft, etc.) rushing to put their programs on the ST -- the lower prices required to sell in the ST market would have a detrimental impact on the pricing structure employed in the profitable MS-DOS market. But you can expect the firms that have pioneered low prices in the IBM world, such as Borland International and DAC Software, to release ST versions of their products and do quite well.

So much for generalities. Just what was there? Here are some highlights.

Spreadsheets. The long awaited VIP Professional had finally shipped the week before COMDEX and was proudly on display with finished packages ready to go. Dan Nelson,

the product manager for VIP, tried to show me the great manual provided with this LOTUS look-a-like, but I wasn't particularly interested. The manual may, indeed, be better than the one provided by Lotus but the fact that VIP was code-compatible with 1-2-3 meant that I, like many other users, simply won't need a manual. Just boot up the program, and once in the familiar 1-2-3 setting, simply start working. IBM users may find an additional bonus. It was the speed of execution which helped propel 1-2-3 ahead of the competition in the IBM world. Dan claimed that VIP on the ST was not only compatible with Lotus, but faster!

VIP wasn't the only spreadsheet available. Kuma Computers Limited was demonstrating A-CALC which will be marketed by Antic. The Kuma rep claimed that only a final round of quality assurance testing, was needed before the program was officially released.

Integrated Packages. Two other spreadsheet programs were announced as part of integrated packages. Rising Star announced seven modules for the ST: RSI Spreadsheet, RSI Graphs (business graphics), RSI Draw (computer-aided design), RSI Paint, RSI Scheduler, and RSI Music (single track MIDI sequence recorder). The music program provided attendees with audio entertainment as they surveyed RSI's products. RSI has been a major developer of software for the Epson line of computers.

The other integrated package, called SoftPac, was introduced by Softronics Computer Systems, a major producer and marketer of vertical market software for the IBM PC and other computers. Besides the spreadsheet program (SoftCalc), SoftPac includes a word processor (SoftWrite), database management (SoftBase), communications (SoftComm), and computer aided design (SoftDraw). Steve Hansen, the president of Softronics, told me that, the day before the show opened, a distributor purchased 60,000 copies of the package. At least somebody expects a lot of STs to showup in the marketplace!

Database Programs. AtariSoft and StoneWare jointly introduced a new (as yet unnamed) filing system for the ST. Some readers may recognize StoneWare as the company that produces DB Master, a high-performance database management system in the MS-DOS market. Stanley Crane, the author of DB Master, gave me a quick demo of the Atari filer. He had a sample mailing list database of 1,000 names indexed on the last name. Gee, that was getting close to the size of the database CURRENT NOTES has to contend with. I asked him to sort the database on the zip code field -- a task that would take SynFile on the 800 about an hour (I'm guessing here since I long ago gave up trying to maintain our mailing list in SynFile). On a COMPAQ with a hard disk using dBASE III, the sort takes a little over two and a half minutes. On the ST? I had to ask Stan to sort it twice since I wasn't paying enough attention the first time -- it only took 2.5 seconds! Obviously, everything was done in RAM and so there is a limit to the size of database the program can handle, but I was impressed nonetheless.

Interested in a more powerful, but still user-friendly database package? Paul Heckel, author of The EI-

ements of Friendly Software Design, and president of QuickView Systems was demonstrating a new "software metaphor" called ZOOMRACKS. This product is really a database management system in disguise. Picture a rack of cards, such as at a time-clock when workers have to punch in and out. You can only see the first line of each card, but if you pull the card out, you will see much more information. That is the concept upon which Zoomracks is built. Move your cursor down to a name and click. Now you see the entire card. To give Paul a little test, I asked him to reindex a sample mailing list database, where cards were listed by last name, to a list based on the state code. The state code was on the fourth line of the card mixed in an alphanumeric filed with a city, i.e. "Las Vegas, NV". Guess what. Paul was able to build a macro on the fly that split off the state abbreviation from the city, moved it to a separate, newly created field, repeated this process on the entire database, and then sorted on that field. Wow! This simple rack concept has much more power in the product than a first glance would reveal.

You say you have already spent two years becoming familiar with dBASE II and aren't interested in learning another database program. Lucky you. You have several options on the ST. Holmes & Duckworth were showing the current version of H & D Base (to be released in mid-December). H & D Base is command file compatible with dBASE II. If you know dBASE, just boot up this program and start working; all your dBASE commands will work just as they did on your CP/M or MS-DOS system. (If you are a developer, you have an added bonus. Since H & D Base is merely an extension of the H & D Forth language system under which it was developed, the full range of unique Atari 520ST capabilities, including windows, menus, dialog boxes, etc. is available. Your dBASE programs can tap into the GEN environment!

Owners of the ATR-8000 will love another option. You may already have dBASE II running under CP/M on your ATR8000. No problem. Just boot up the CP/M Emulator Program on your ST and now you can run your entire CP/M library! (Of course you'll have to transfer the programs to the ST's 3.5 inch disk format.) Not only can you use the commands you are familiar with, you can use the same program. The CP/M Emulator was not officially demonstrated at COMDEX, but Frank Nagle, head of the Bay Area Atari Users Group, managed to get a sneak preview from one of the Atari reps. Frank said the program had no trouble booting up WordStar and running it, in fact, running it faster than on his own native CP/M system!

Besides the above programs, and the ones announced in the integrated packages, Hippo had already shipped Hippo Simple, a "powerful, flexible and easy-to-use database," BMB CompuScience was demonstrating The Manager, "a full-featured database manager with on-screen forms and report writer", Regent Software announced Regent Base, "a full function relational database program" available by February, and OXXI Inc announced dbONE, another database program claimed to be 100 percent compatible with dBASE II files.

Word Processors. Several word processors were already out for the ST before COMDEX. STWriter (no where visible at COMDEX) had been released "free" by Atari and HabaWriter, by Haba, and Final Word, by Mark of the Unicorn, were already on store shelves. I was able to see HabaWriter for the first time at COMDEX and also saw a demonstration of the new Regent Word as well as Regent Spell programs. For those of you who like the what-you-see-is-what-you-get word processors, this one's for you. In previewing text, not only are boldface and underline shown in the preview, but elongated text is actually shown on the screen in double width and both super- and subscript are displayed just as they would appear on your paper. Regent Word, written by the developers of Atariwriter and Atariwriter Plus, also supports elongated, underlined etc. in their print preview. Poor spellers in the audience will certainly appreciate Regent Spell. Not only does it find the errant spelling (and show it to you in context), but it will give you 10 suggested correct spellings. It comes with a dictionary of 30,000 words which you can expand to 60,000 words. Both Regent Word and Spell are available now. And, finally, if you can't type as well as you'd like, you can always pick up Typing Tutor (including Word Invaders) by Academy Software to get your typing speed up to snuff.

Other word processors announced (although not necessarily demonstrated) were PaperClip and HomePak by Batteries Included, Hippo Word, Hippo Concept, and Hippo Spell by Hippopotamus, Word Whiz by Oxxi Inc., SoftWrite by Softronics, First Word by GST, and Word Processor by Spinner. For those interested in typesetting, Typesetter ST was demonstrated by Xlent and Andra/ST, a document processor for laser printers and FX80 compatibles, was announced by TDI Software.

Languages. If you have an inclination to do some programming, there will be more than enough languages to choose from. Right now, you can use Atari's development package (C and assembler), ST BASIC (only recently released), or ST LOGO. Haba has released Hippo C and the Dragon Group has 4xForth. At COMDEX, TDI was selling their Modula-2/ST package, H & D were showing their Forth package, ANTIC had the META Macro Assembler and was also demonstrating A-SEKA, a 68000 ram-resident assembler from KUMA, and Philon was showing their basic interpreter, Henry, with a compiled version on the way. Further C compilers are coming from GST and Lattice. Prolog will be available from OSS and Fortran from Philon while Pascal programmers will be able to choose among products from META, OSS, Philon, Prospero, and TDI.

Programming aids, such as ram disks and disk utilities were in abundance from a variety of producers. MichTron in particular now has a full scope of programming utilities including M-Disk (a ram disk), Soft Spool (a printer spooler), Michtron Utilities (examine & repair disk files), MI-Dupe (backup disks), and M-Copy (speed up disk duplication). If you really like to examine, in detail, your disk files, you're certainly in luck; you can now choose from the Disk Doctor from Antic, Toolbox (Vol. One) from H & D, Disk Utilities from Hippo, and Personal Diskit from OSS.

Other Software. I wish I could go on about the rich variety of new entertainment and speciality software introduced at COMDEX, but I fear that if I tried, this issue of CURRENT NOTES would never get finished. In the months ahead, we will have ample opportunity to acquaint you with the best of each category.

Hardware. This was primarily a software show. Atari announced no new hardware products. However, there were several companies using Atari hard disk drives in their demonstrations. I was told that these 20-megabyte hard disks were being shipped to developers who had them on order. Indeed, the backlog of orders was just about filled. Retail channels will see these 20-meg drives by the end of the year. There will be no 10-meg drives, but a 30-meg drive may also be available.

Atari has decided not to produce a color printer for the ST. Why? Because Okidata had a color printer on display made specifically for the ST. And the quality of the color pictures? Certainly among the best I've seen produced anywhere! I was sorry I had to leave before getting to the Okidata booth to ask some more about this marvelous printer.

How about TOS in ROM? Neil Harris, publisher of Atari Explorer, told me the operating system was set and that the program was going out on Monday (November 25) for mass production. Developers would get the ROMs very soon and retail channels would begin seeing the ROMs appear before the end of the year. Early user group purchasers were promised free upgrades to the operating system. Dave Duberman, Atari User Group Coordinator, confirmed this and said he would be sending the ROMs out when they became available.

There was a hot rumor just before the show that Atari would introduce a laser-type printer (i.e. laser-quality output but using a different technology), at a price less than \$1,000. It was a nice rumor, but there was no such printer there nor would anyone confirm (or deny) the rumor. And, as you'll notice in the Antic report, there were no CD-ROM players available from Atari -- so far Atari has not found a supplier willing to sell the drive at the price Atari wants.

AI on the ST. Before I close, I must mention a delightful little program from Hippo that I received shortly before going to COMDEX. It's called Computer Almanac and if you want to impress your friends with just how clever your ST is, you'll have to get this program. While they watch in amazement, you sit at the keyboard and ask your ST questions. Here is what a typical session might look like (my questions are shown in italics to help distinguish them from the Almanac's answers):

What time is it in Moscow?

It is Sunday, 5:01 AM in Moscow, Soviet Union when it is Saturday, 9:01 PM in Washington, District of Columbia.

Who won the 1980 Superbowl?

I didn't understand that.



Who won the 1980 Super Bowl?

The Oakland Raiders won against the Philadelphia Eagles in the 1980 Super Bowl (Jan. 1981), with a score of 27 to 10.

How many calories in an Apple?

There are 325 calories in 1 cup of apple or brown Betty.
There are 33 calories in 1 tbsp of apple butter.
There are 410 calories in 1 piece of apple pie.
There are 96 calories in 1 med raw apple.
There are 234 calories in 1 cup of dried apple.
There are 117 calories in 1 cup unsweetened apple juice.

What picture won the Academy Award for Best Picture in 1971?

The French Connection won the Academy Award for Best Picture in 1971.

How far is it to Las Vegas?

Las Vegas, Nevada is 2084 miles from Washington, District of Columbia.

How do you say "Hello" in Swahili?

"Hello" in English is "hujambo" in Swahili.

What is the area code for Reno?

The area code for Reno, Nevada is 702.

Who won the Nobel prize for Chemistry in 1982?

The 1982 Nobel Prize for Chemistry was won by Aaron Klug of U.K.

Well, I think you get the idea. Use free form English questions and the Almanac uses its own intelligence to interpret your question and give you an answer. The Almanac has over 35,000 useful facts. You could go on for quite some time asking a wide variety of questions and getting appropriate answers. But beware! Don't give the keyboard to your friends. It isn't that hard to stump the Almanac. It can only answer questions about things it knows and the first question coming from the peanut gallery is likely to be about something it doesn't know! But it certainly does know a lot and you can have loads of fun amazing your friends with Computer Almanac.

ST Public Domain Library

The following disks can be ordered from CURRENT NOTES, 122 N. Johnson Rd., Sterling, VA 22170. Cost is \$4.25/disk plus \$0.50 for an envelope.

- | | |
|-------------------------|------------------------------|
| #1-High Resolution Pics | #10-MIDI Music Demos |
| #2-Color Slide Show 1* | #11-RAMDISK & Docs |
| #3-4x4 Demo Disk | #12-DOODLE with Source Code |
| #4-ST Terminal Prgs | #13-DEGAS Picture Show* |
| #5-Commercial Demos* | #14-NEOCHROME w/docs & pics* |
| #6-Color Slide Show 2* | #15-STWRITER w/docs |
| #7-Graphics Demos | #16-Color Slide Show 3* |
| #8-Sample C Programs | #17-Color Slide Show 4* |
| #9-Sample LOGO Programs | #18-Utility Programs |

* Color monitors only.

MichTron

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AVAILABLE AT YOUR NEAREST ATARI DEALER
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To the Atari ST and all its new owners, congratulations from MichTron! Never have we seen a computer with such promise. Our enthusiastic crew has already turned its talents to this remarkable new machine. Although new to the Atari software field, we at MichTron are natives to the industry. We've written over 50 successful programs for the Sanyo 550, Tandy Color Computer, and IBM PC, proving the depth of our commitments, and the quality of our results.

Our first Atari programs are ready to go: fun, fast, colorful games, and utilities made for speed, efficiency, and simplicity. All reasonably priced, with more coming every day...

M-DISK by Timothy Purves

M-Disk will give you the power of an extra disk drive without the extra cost! This amazing device is super-fast, incredibly tough, and costs only as much as a single piece of software!

The key is that *M-Disk* isn't a hardware device; it's a software utility! It reserves a portion of your computer's memory, which is formatted to resemble the data on a disk drive. *M-Disk* makes the operating system recognize this as a hardware device, giving you the equivalent of an extra disk drive: all the speed and power, without the extra cost!

For the Atari ST \$39.95

SOFT SPOOL by Timothy Purves

Get your computer and printer to work as a team! When printing files (from your word processor, TOS, or anywhere else), your computer is just dead weight: waiting and waiting for the printer to finish the job. With *Soft Spool*, the wait is over! Your computer can think and print at the same time! Whenever you print something, instead of going immediately to the printer, it waits in *Soft Spool's* RAM buffer. You can then use your computer normally (edit files, write programs, etc.), as the spooler feeds its data to your printer whenever possible, saving hours of computer time.

For the Atari ST \$39.95

MUDPIES by Phil MacKenzie & Jeffrey Sorenson

When the circus came to town, young Arnold just had to get in on the fun. When the clowns put on their crazy show, Arnold picked up a mudpie and threw it at the nearest clown! But the clowns didn't think it was so funny. They threw things back and tried to catch him. Soon the place was a *REAL* circus!

Keep Arnold from harm by using mudpies to ward off angry clowns in this fun-filled arcade game. Challenge rounds, special prizes, mud-slinging rounds, amazing music and sound effects make this a great addition to anyone's game collection!

Requires Atari ST & TV or color monitor \$39.95

FLIP SIDE by Ken Olson & Phil Hollyer

You'll flip over this Reversi-type strategy game! Surround and flip an opponent's piece. This simple rule leads to strategies as complex as your imagination! Animated graphics bring the board to life as pieces flip themselves.

Play against another person, or against the computer in one of six skill-levels: from novice to expert with look ahead ability. The computer can show all your available moves, or suggest one for you. You can switch sides with the computer, and even edit the board for creating your own custom challenges!

For the Atari ST \$39.95

CALENDAR by J. Weaver Jr.

This complete appointment and reminder calendar is the perfect addition to your GEM desktop. Easily accessible anywhere within the GEM system, *Calendar* lets you display and print calendars of any year and month. You can store reminder messages of any date, any time, from 1980 to 2099. You can even set special "alarms" to inform you of noted events as they occur! Alarms will appear at the selected time on the Desktop or within any GEM application program: even when *Calendar* is not on the screen!

For the Atari ST \$39.95

MI-TERM by J. Weaver Jr.

This smart-terminal modem program lets your computer communicate! Through your modem and *Mi-Term*, ordinary phone lines become a wealth of information. *Mi-Term* has transfer routines to support virtually any remote system: ASCII, DFT, X-modem protocols and more. You can set options and parameters to meet the requirements of each system (even while on line)! And our pull-down menus, *Mi-Term* is easy to use. Transfer programs, send messages, and even "talk" between computers. There's a big world out there. Greet it with open arms; greet it with *Mi-Term*!

Requires Atari ST with modem \$39.95

SUPER ZAP by Timothy Purves

This new utility gives you complete access to your disks' memory. *Super Zap* lets you scan disk data in HEX and ASCII formats for easy reference. You can edit the data and save any changes directly to the disk. Whether you need to make quick changes to data, simple updates to programs, find "lost" files, or fix disk errors, *Super Zap* is the super solution.

For the Atari ST \$39.95

TIME BANDIT by Bill Dunlavy & Harry Lafferty

Action! Test your wit, skill, and loyalties! Battle Evil Guardians as you try to escape with the Treasures of Time. Dual-play mode even lets two play simultaneously, each on his own window! Help or hinder your partner, but beware of treachery; if one player dies, he may still return for revenge!

Adventure! Use the Timegates to visit over 20 unique adventuring areas with over 15 levels each! Explore medieval dungeons, western frontiers, and future worlds all in one game! And somewhere, somewhere, is a great mystery, just waiting to be solved.

Art! This fast arcade-game uses all the ST's special features! Unique creatures and 3-D terrain for each Time, beautiful scrolling landscapes, detailed animation, thrilling sound and music, hundreds of screens: the conquest of Time and Space awaits you!

Requires Atari ST & TV or color monitor \$49.95

Proudly announcing our first programs for the Atari ST!

4 x FORTH for the Atari 520ST

by Bob Dutton

4xFORTH was one of the first programming products available for the 520 ST. Several commercial software products written in 4xFORTH are already on the market. STALK is one of them. 4xFORTH comes in several flavors: the Level 1 system, the Level 2 system, accelerators for Levels 1 and 2, and a developer's system. This review is about the Level 1 system. The Level 1 system is a basic Forth system, which does not enable the user to interface with GEM.

The Level 2 system, which has not been released yet, contains a GEM interface and 32-bit floating point. A phone call to the Dragon Group got the information that they are holding the Level 2 system until they get the new release of TOS from ATARI. Let us all hope that the mess between ATARI, DRI, and APPLE gets straightened out soon.

The developer's system enables you to generate a compiled program. The developer's system includes both the Level 1 and 2 systems and the accelerators.

The Forth language bears some similarities to LOGO - programs (called WORDS in Forth) are built by using other programs, thus leading to a very modular system. Forth code tends to be very compact, and efficient. The modular nature of the code lends itself to identifying which portions of code are exercised most frequently and could lead to performance improvements by recoding in assembly language, which is easy to do in a Forth system. The structure of the Forth language has a conceptual elegance and simplicity which is difficult to communicate if you're not already familiar with the language. Forth combines the advantages of being able to execute code interactively for testing and experimentation, and being able to compile parts of code that have been tested. The modularity of Forth makes it easy to do this in a way that I've not seen duplicated in any other language. After using Forth, it's very frustrating to go back to a procedure-oriented language like Fortran, Pascal, or (ugh!) Basic. I know of no other language that offers you the flexibility to create your programming environment to suit your own tastes the way that Forth does.

Forth is a language which was developed by a man named Charles Moore, who was writing programs to control Radio Telescopes in observatories. It has acquired a large following since then. Forth users are frequently accused of being fanatics about the language. It's true - I know, because I am one of them.

Back in the early days, when Forth was not readily available, a group of people developed Forth implementations for a number of machines, and placed them all in the public domain. A group call FIG, for Forth Interest Group, was formed to promote the use of Forth, and support the dissemination of the public domain versions, which are known as FIG-FORTH. The effort was wildly successful, with the result that Forth has been ported to an enormous number of computers. FIG has established a standards group, in an attempt to maintain some portability between systems. The standards group has published two standards,

one in 1979, and one in 1983. It is my informal observation, that in terms of number of users, that far more people are using FIG-FORTH systems than either of the two standards. To this day, much of the material presented in Forth Dimensions, the FIG newsletter, is still written in FIG-FORTH.

Because of the way Forth was initially disseminated, there have not been a lot of commercially successful Forth products (until the IBM PC came out). The typical Forth programmer was a highly technically skilled programmer, who frequently had the source code to his system, and had no hesitations about modifying it. The FIG group, through it's newsletter and local chapter meetings promoted widespread distribution of public domain code. It was not until the IBM PC, that there was much in the way of commercially available Forth systems. Since then, several systems based on the 83-Standard have been offered. Standards are a double-edged sword, however. The vendor has a certain incentive to offer a standard system, so that code already developed can be used, and new code can be transported to other systems. There is also a strong pull to offer enhancements, to make the product stand out in the marketplace. More about this later.

The 4xFORTH manual comes in a 8 x 9 inch orange three-ring binder. My first complaint has to do with the pages themselves which are 5 1/2 x 8 1/2. There is a 1 1/2 in. margin at the bottom of every page, which cuts down substantially on the amount on the page. This, coupled with the small print used, and the lightness of the print in some places, made the manual difficult to read for me.

They say right up front in the manual that it is not intended to be a tutorial, and it isn't. They refer the reader to Leo Brodie's book Starting Forth for tutorial information. I have no problem with this approach. Starting Forth is one of the best books I have ever read about computers, and I highly recommend it. One problem is that Starting Forth is not written about FIG-FORTH, or either of the Forth Standards, but is written about Poly-Forth, the Forth system put out by Forth Inc., the company that Charles Moore started. 4xFORTH seems to be close to the 83 standard. I would have liked to have seen a section of the manual that discussed ways in which 4xFORTH does or does not meet the standard. Some of that information is scattered throughout the manual. Given that they have chosen Starting Forth as a tutorial reference, I would have liked a section on any differences that exist between 4xFORTH and the implementation discussed in Starting Forth.

4xFORTH has some nice features, some of which I've seen in other systems, some that I haven't. There is a multi-tasking feature, allowing more than one task to run at a time. I did not have the time to experiment with this feature, but it looked like it would do some nifty things. There is the ability to communicate with another system over the serial interface, thus setting up a simple local network. A simple graphics interface is provided,

enabling the drawing of rectangles, polygons, etc., and some line drawing primitives, and a sprite capability. Forth systems typically don't protect the user from himself, so that the novice, and sometimes the expert can find himself crashing the system because of illegal memory references. 4xFORTH provides a facility for checking memory references and aborting on an illegal reference. This facility can be turned on for debugging, and turned off once a program runs properly, which is the way it should be done.

Forth systems traditionally have existed outside of the operating system that they were running under, and thus not using the file system of the host computer. 4xFORTH is different in that the area of the disk accessible to 4xFORTH is contained in a TOS file. There is some advantage to having it this way, but you lose some flexibility in not being able to address the entire disk. If it is possible to do that, I couldn't find it in the manual. There also doesn't appear to be a way to read or write a standard TOS file. There are file primitives that provide for file access, but they appear to want the file to be constructed of FORTH blocks, with the length of the file in the first 4 bytes of the file.

Since Forth systems use a different file structure from the operating system they are running under, a Forth system usually comes with its own editor. 4xFORTH comes with a simple screen editor, that is probably adequate for program development. It is not as powerful as some of the Forth editors available in the public domain, and since you don't have the source for the 4xFORTH editor, upgrading the editor would involve simply loading a new one in. It appears that you would not be able to reclaim the memory space occupied by the old editor.

I found the descriptions of some of the precompiled words in the system to be too brief. Even with assuming some technical knowledge on the part of the user, I think more detail needs to be provided. Some of the descriptions are misleading. An example is the word RED, which the documentation describes as "sets the foreground color to RED." That's not exactly what it does. What it does do is to set the foreground color to use a certain color palette register, and if you have that register set to red (which it is on the system disks distributed) then you get red. If you have it set to yellow, then you get yellow when you say RED.

In general, I found the manual to be somewhat confusing. Some parts of the system are described in the front part of the manual. There is a section in the back of the manual with a description of words in the precompiled dictionary. Some words are described in both places, some in only one place. The index uses a novel means of organization. Many words appear to have an index entry for themselves, but there is an index entry for "commands, FORTH", under which it appears that each Forth word has another listing. For example, the Forth word TYPE appears in the index on both pages Index-14, and Index-23.

There must be some happy medium in making the transition to commercial systems for Forth, but we haven't found it yet. In the old days, if your system was somewhat

lacking in documentation, it didn't matter too much if you had the source code and could look to see what was really going on. But in a commercial product where the innards of the system are proprietary, then a high level of documentation is called for. 4xFORTH is lacking in this respect.

There is an area of performance where 4xFORTH is lacking that particularly concerns me. This is the ability to save the compiled version of your applications program. In 4xFORTH, your program must be recompiled from the source code for every use. I consider this a serious deficiency.

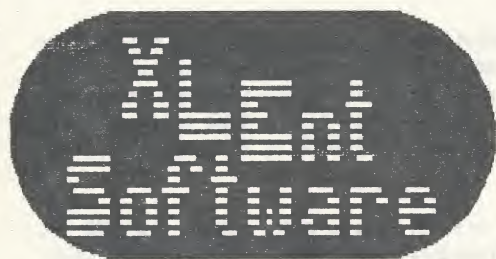
Summary

4xFORTH is a product that clearly has had much work put into its development. It appears to be a solid product. In the short time that I used it, I sometimes found things whose operations were not clear, but I never found anything that appeared to be a bug. This makes it compare favorably to some of the products that we have seen prematurely rushed to market for the 520 ST. Even with my feelings about the number of ways that the documentation needs to be improved, I've seen worse. I think that if you're willing to spend the time to sort it out, you can probably find or figure out what you are looking for. The lack of the ability to save your compiled application I consider a serious defect, one that I hope will be remedied.

I have some reservations about the price, which is \$100 for the Level 1 system. I think all of us who bought the 520 ST were impressed with the graphic capability, and the user interface using the mouse, and I think some people will have some hesitations about spending that much money for a programming system that does not allow access to the more advanced features of the 520 ST contained in 6EM. I suspect that we will soon see other programming products for under \$100 that have some interfaces to 6EM, allowing you to use windows, menus, and mice. On the other hand, 4xFORTH is available now, and it works. You can do a lot worse than purchasing a program that's available now and works.

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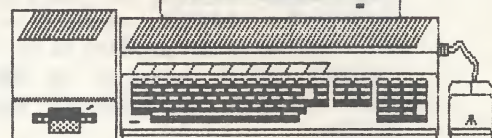


b4

Dennis Young

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520ST



Typesetter ST Version 1.0 (Monochrome Only)

THE FIRST PROFESSIONAL LAYOUT PROGRAM FOR THE ATARI 520ST

PAPER drawings on to the screen! The grid has been scaled so that the rectangles on the screen will print out as true squares on EPSON compatible printers.

High resolution **DIGITIZED** screens and **GRAPHICS** screens of 32K or images created with **DEGAS** can be loaded into **TYPESETTER ST**, as displayed in this layout. If you have a Newsletter you could design your own title page, with all the columns and stuff and then load the form into the machine and fill in the text, save it and then print it.

TYPESETTER ST is a program that can be used to produce business advertisements, club newsletters or any thing you can think of without the **HIGH COST** of professional **TYPESETTING**.

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With 23 available fonts, the user will have complete layout freedom. This tiny print will give you the freedom to say a lot in a very tiny space! This will keep down your ad costs. Large fonts will emphasize sales, promotions and other important points. All this for only \$39.95.

Rotate letters...

Typesetter ST
features many
shapes and fills

The secret of Typesetter is flexibility!

STWRITER: Power Without Any Price?

by Frank Sommers

Owners and future buyers of the ST 520 are seeking a machine with a power and capability that lifts you up, out and beyond available 8-bit machines, including the excellent 130XE. Most, if not all, comparisons of the ST and the Amiga agree that the eye-grabbing animation and sound of the Amiga are countered by the superior word processing capabilities of our loved, cherished and to-be-protected Atari ST 520. But to stay true, we need for this high-powered machine, equally mighty software. Does STWRITER, just issued by Atari, as a hasty transplant for the missing or deceased GEM WRITE, meet that criterion?

The price is fetching. New buyers will receive the word processing program (along with NEOCHROME, the standard for GEM DRAW) free. Current owners can download it from Compuserve, obtain it from their user's group, or acquire it for the cost of a disk from their friendly computer store (STWRITER is available for \$4.00 as disk no. 15 in the *Current Notes* ST Library - Ed.). This contrasts starkly with Express at \$40, Mince (an editor rather than WP) at \$125, HABA WRITE at \$50, or Final Word (an expansion of Mince, to be reviewed next time) for \$140. But free is less than that if the documentation and the program don't get you up and running, i.e. assist in making you more productive in your writing than you were with your previous writing device or software program.

Documentation. What do you get? STWRITER's documentation is contained on the disk and you read it on your ST after booting and loading TUTORIAL.DOC. Along with this 17-page electronic tutorial comes an 18-page reference manual (REFERENC.DOC) and a quick reference file that provides you with all commands and function controls in four pages (QUICKREF.DOC). The rest of the disk packages contains the STWRITER program, a configuration file for those with non-Epson compatible printers as well as a data file, which you can edit, that contains the relevant printer codes, and, finally, a short file telling you how to start up STWRITER's tutorial.

Printer Configuration. For those of you with Epson compatible printers the program configures instantly with the running of Config.Prg, a file included with ST WRITER. This generates an auxiliary file on your disk named XYZZX.DAT that ST Writer looks for and reads, if available, each time you print a file to a printer. The configuration file that comes on your ST Writer is set up for Epson printers and compatibles. Reportedly, a program and instructions to let you customize this file for other printers is available for downloading from the Atari BBS (408-745-5308), and hopefully is available from your local computer store. For those of you familiar with control codes for your printer, usually the decimal equivalents of print characters, you may load the XTZZX.TXT file into STWRITER, and then edit it, with ST Writer, placing printer control codes (decimal values) where indicated. Do not add or delete any lines from this file. If four lines are provided for a particular function (for example, turn underline on), enter whatever decimal codes your printer requires and fill the remainder of the lines with a null byte (decimal 255). Save file when edited and then

run STconfig program to create your own customized printer data file.

For the Novice. The package assumes the user may be confronting his first word processor program and starts with due gentleness, succinctly describing what this "beast" is that stares at you, how it will serve you, and after a few insights into typing with a WP, suddenly there you are, being asked to type in your first tutorial. This takes you thru the basic controls, and shortly you are saving and loading a program as though it was old hat. By the time you have finished your second tutorial, you are familiar if not skilled with global search and replace, deleting letters, whole lines, and even blocks of text, which you can also move, copy, delete and restore if in error. The tutorial follows with formatting and printing tricks while the reference manual contains a detailed alphabetical glossary of terms and commands -- this in addition to your quick reference listing.

Skilled Veterans. Those scarred soldiers of the 5-year jungle hunt for the best available Atari word processor may remember their first page editor, or the long awaited 1981 Atari Word Processor's 3-inch hard cover, multi-sectioned, 100-page volume that left you wrung out and shaking after several days of intense study, a week of trying and more study. And the slow climb up thru Letter Perfect, Text Wizard, Bank Street Writer, then a new version of LP, and finally Atari Writer, only to be tempted by other Merlinesque potions that might turn your computer into gold, like Paper Clip, Home Text, Writer's Tool and the rest. If you wear those service badges or already are using STWRITER and wonder how others evaluate it, read on.

Commands and Ease of Use. The program loads and splat your screen turns black with white-lettered menu choices capitalized in red. The choices, with two additions, are identical to Atari Writer: Create, delete, edit, load, save, print, and index files to disk. The commands are rather obvious, the usual ones, and are triggered by pressing the first letter of the word.

One of the new boys is the "Receive 850" command which permits you to transfer your old files from your 8-bit Atari to the ST and save them to disk. A handy touch, as you connect your two computers via the 850 interface and a modem cable adapted to the ST and plugged into the interface. After setting up STWRITER and pushing Load, you set up your Atari, load in an RS232 handler, and commanding it to SAVE the file you have loaded into memory for transfer, you assign the name "R:". Push (Return) and watch your Atari file print out on your ST monitor. A magical sight.

Similarly, the new "Save to Disk" command facilitates ready preparation of documentation for your programs, which can easily be reloaded to Printer or Screen, as those of you who have W.A.A.C.E. club disks have been doing to learn about their programs.



Now with all of that, how easy is STWRITER to use? Those of you familiar with Atari Writer or Atari Writer Plus or the old Text Wizard, the forebear of Atari Writer, will discover that the adjustment is probably greater in using the ST keyboard and its function keys, F1-F10, than it is in adjusting to STWRITER, so similar are the two programs. (Even as I type I have to look to find the ST arrow keys; just not where they were on the ole 800 or 130 XE). So a fair answer would be that there is an adjustment, as there is in switching from any word processor to a new one. In fact most, if they unzip their soul, will admit to having seldom found an easier WP than the first one they used for any considerable time. Switching over to a new one, for the over-15 crowd, demands that most difficult skill, unlearning. And as I confess that, I find myself breaking stride as I try to delete a word, and hesitate between the Backspace key and the Delete key (the first deletes the letter to the left of the cursor, the second the letter or space under the cursor) and unlearn the way I did it with Atari Writer or Paper Clip.

Print Preview. So, where's the jazz in this program? (I shan't plod thru the standard commands, or attempt to use this review as a partial tutorial. The commands are nicely documented throughout the tutorial manual itself and covered again in both the Quick Reference document and the Reference Manual. With the manual loaded into ST WRITER, a fast search command will glide you thru your document, directly to the item.)

One of the first bits of jazz for the power voyeur is catching a print preview of your work exactly in the size and shape it will appear on paper, in either single or double column format. It glides by, and those of you drawn to the ST 520 by the prospect of a real 80-column word processor, will ooze pleasure at your first try. A ping on the escape key, and at the sight of the Menu, a P for Print and you are asked to select whether you wish to do it to screen, disk, or printer. "To screen," you say, and selecting the number of copies and then the exact pages to preview, another ping and there it is, all 80-columns of it. (Exceptions are the usual lack of visual representation of elongated, or condensed print.) The global search-and-replace commands, (F-6 and F-7 function keys), function normally, but again, more eye dazzling to observe than on the 40-column screen, as the monitor rolls back, like a blinking eyelid and then swims up with your replaced portion staring at you.

So too with the block move, copy, and delete commands (F-5). A Shift/F5 double keying produces a small luminescent green rectangle in front of the block; a repeat of the command at the end of the block, and everything in-between the two markers is at your mercy. You can delete it, you can transfer it to another location, and if it is so choice in structure and symmetry you can copy it again in another location. And everytime you do any of these things, you are visited by a small blip of pleasure at the power you have over all those letters on your monitor.

A few other nicities. Blocks can also be saved to disk for later use as you wish. This is handy for saving special format lines that you use regularly, or text that you may wish to merge into other letters or chain to other

files. The global replace command can be used to delete globally by merely declining to type anything into the "Replace with:" prompt.

Printing is flexible. You have a combination of sixteen different print styles, depending on how you elect to combine bold, italics, elongated, condensed, and regular print. You may also, should your printer support it, use escape code inserts to tailor your print fonts as you could with the Atari Writer. This was one of the drawbacks, for the merchant printer, of Paper Clip.

Sub-files. Some of you know the satisfaction of being able to have more than 64 titles on your disks when using one of the other 8-bit operating systems, such as MDOS or SPARTA DOS. GEM makes all that possible with the STWRITER, which permits you to store and query files in folders. If you are using the "Index File" command to see the directory of a disk, you can also see the directory of a folder on that disk where you may have elected to squirl away your STWRITER text files, all under one folder heading, or a doc folder where you keep all your STWRITER tutorial and print configuration documents, to save clutter on the main screen. With an A: or a B: response to the Index of Files query, "Path name?:" (read, which disk), you type a right slash and immediately, the directory of the individual folder will slide down the screen.

Deficiencies. After a double column file fills up beyond about 75 k, you notice a slight slowing down of the cursor speed. The typing can back up on you, and you detect the program ios about to crash. If you use the F1 function key to fast scroll to the top of the file, and then try to fast scroll back you arrive at a blank screen with a blinking cursor. An effort to scroll up one page at a time, appears to lock up the program. A hurried attempt to fast scroll to the top of the buffer, leaves the screen motionless. At that you may curse the cursor and, if you haven't saved your file recently, bemoan your loss. By accident, something may interrupt before you reboot in anger. After the interruption, you suddenly look back at the monitor and the screen is back at the top of the buffer. A check and you discover it always recovers within 60-90 seconds, if you wait. Is this a perpetual weakness in the program when printing double columns? Try running your file thru the print preview to screen. Then go back to the end of the file. You will find, as I just have, as I type, that the the previewing has taken the paralysis out of the cursor and it skips along as rapidly as your fingers demand. Why? A mystery, seeking a future explanation. But it still crashes for a while if you use the F1 function key to scoot to the end of the long file.

Ranking. Where does STWRITER belong in the tryouts for Miss ST WP of '86? Quite honestly, my enthusiasm, which had been surging, slackened when the cursor slowed and crashed at the end of the file fast-scroll-freeze up. With the apparent cure, (print previewing of the large double-column file, I will now suggest that ST WRITER for the ST 520 is at least an equal to the best of the 8-bit WP's for the ATARI. ST WRITER is not a powerful dedicated WP program, of the kind you would expect ATARI would have insured would be available by now to guarantee the success

of a superb new-generation machine. Each of us has different needs in computer writing, but whether you favor Paper Clip, Writer's Tool, or Atari Writer with or without the "Plus" appended, or are a Letter Perfect fanatic, you will likely be pleased to find a writing program up to your ST. Some of you will wish for modifications or improvements. Those of you who have adjusted to Paper Clip, will long for the double-window wonder-trip for editing and rewriting. Speed editors will yearn for expanded "movement" or cursor play, the ability to jump from word to word, rather than letter to letter, or paragraph to paragraph, or to be able to delete whole words at one key command, or to delete an entire file, not just from the cursor to the end, but from the cursor to the beginning of the file. So there will be "wish lists", as there should be, for a more powerful writing tool. And an instant facility will not be acquired in one or two sittings, but rather in ten or fifteen, before you think about what you are writing, without pausing to decypher a command. But to date, this is the best word processor for the ST that I have encountered, and as my first WP companion on the ST I may have trouble turning my back on it. It gets better and better with each encounter. Unless the first view of the incomplete GEM WRITE was misleading, ST WRITER could make it obsolete before it's debut.

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The
ATARI 520ST
Journal

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Meeting the Special Needs of Atari ST Programmers

ST Writer Commands

Note: ^ = [Control] key
S = [Shift] key

Cursor Movement:

| | |
|------------------|-----------|
| Up 1 Line..... | ↑ |
| Dn 1 Line..... | ↓ |
| Up 1 Screen.... | ^↑ |
| Dn 1 Screen.... | ^↓ |
| Left 1 char.... | ← |
| Right 1 char.... | → |
| Left to beg.... | ^←/^A/SF2 |
| Right to end.... | ^→/^Z/F2 |
| Top of File.... | SF1 |
| Bottom of File: | F1 |

Text Blocks:

| | |
|-----------------|---------|
| Mark Beginning: | SF5 |
| Mark End..... | SF5 |
| Delete..... | F5 |
| Duplicate..... | Insert |
| Move..... | SInsert |

Search & Replace:

| | |
|-----------------|-----|
| Search Forward: | F6 |
| Search Reverse: | SF6 |
| Query Replace.. | F7 |
| Global Replace: | SF7 |

Page Format:

| | |
|------------------|------|
| Top Margin..... | ^Tnn |
| Bottom Margin.. | ^Bnn |
| Left Margin..... | ^Lnn |
| Right Margin.... | ^Rnn |
| 2nd col left.... | ^Mnn |
| 2nd col right.. | ^Nnn |
| Page Length.... | ^Ynn |
| Header..... | ^H |
| Footer..... | ^F |

Delete Text:

| | |
|-----------------|-----------|
| Left of █..... | Backspace |
| Under █..... | Delete |
| To end of line: | SDelete |
| To end of file: | ^Delete |
| Entire text.... | ^Home |
| Restore text... | Undo |

Type Fonts:

| | |
|-----------------|-----|
| Pica (10 cpi): | ^G0 |
| Elite (12 cpi): | ^G8 |
| Cond (17 cpi): | ^G2 |

Character control:

| | |
|-----------------|------------|
| Bold..... | ^G1 |
| Italics..... | ^G4 |
| Subscript..... | F10...SF10 |
| Superscript.... | SF10...F10 |
| ELONGATED..... | SF9...SF9 |
| Underline..... | SF3...SF3 |
| Caps change.... | F3 |

Tabs:

| | |
|-----------------|------|
| Clear all tabs: | ^TAB |
| Restore tabs... | STAB |
| Set tab at █... | F4 |

Other:

| | |
|-----------------|------|
| Center text.... | ^C |
| Block right.... | ^C^C |
| Justify On..... | ^J1 |
| Justify Off.... | ^J0 |
| Page eject..... | ^E |
| Page number.... | S2 |
| Page wait..... | ^W |
| Line spacing... | ^Sn |
| Form print..... | F9 |

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Battle Bytes*by M. Evan Brooks***Battalion Commander**

BATTALION COMMANDER (\$39.95) is a new SSI offering to the computer gamer. Designed by David Hille, it is very reminiscent of his earlier effort, COMBAT LEADER. COMBAT LEADER was received with little notice, although the game possessed certain indications of greatness, e.g. real time play, facile joystick input, and the ability to switch from overall command down to squad level command. BATTALION COMMANDER updates the system, and for an introductory game, it is well done.

The premise is that the player (solitaire option only) is a battalion commander in either the American, Soviet or Chinese army. He may oppose one of the other forces of equivalent strength in one of four scenarios (Pursuit and Exploitation, Meeting Engagement, Attack, and Defense). The map is functional; graphics are somewhat limited, although the presence of contour lines showing various terrain elevations must be considered a plus.

Input is via joystick; it is easy to learn and quick to implement. SSI rarely uses joystick input, and it is always nice to have a new product using the abilities of the joystick.

The documentation is fairly complete. It delineates the types of troops that one commands, and the abilities of the different types of units. Determining the best use of these units is left to the player's abilities or lack thereof.

Setting up the game is also easy. Although one cannot create different terrain a la KAMPFGRUPPE, the game comes with forty (40) different terrain maps -- sufficient for the most dedicated gamer.

Play is similar to COMBAT LEADER. The graphics have been improved, in that AFV (armored fighting vehicles) now do resemble their real-life counterparts. However, armored casualties appear on the map as resembling dead spiders; on the other hand, this is a vast improvement from COMBAT LEADER, where destroyed AFV's resembled dead cockroaches. Casualties are taken by individual vehicle and/or men. Proper tactical utilization will result in victory. But what is proper utilization?

For the beginner, the best advice is to use common sense. With time not generally a restraint, take advantage of cover. Use scout/reconnaissance elements to find the enemy; but use armor to fix and destroy the enemy. This does not mean impressive tank charges across open terrain. Instead, using cover and concealment within woods and rough terrain, one can defeat the enemy with little risk. Overly ambitious types growing tired of such defensive victories may assume the offensive; victory may be achieved, but the cost in vehicles and manpower should teach a lesson to such a leader.

Armor is the main driver on the battlefield. Unlike COMBAT LEADER, the omnipotent mortar unit is now more realistically portrayed. However, the anti-tank units seem far too weak. In the modern battlefield, what may be seen may be killed. RPGs and TOWs are more efficient tank killers than other armor units; also, they are far cheaper to produce. But in BATTALION COMMANDER, the tank is the weapon of choice. This weakness does not affect play, merely reality. One major lesson learnable: employ smoke where possible. Screening advancing units by smoke will reduce casualties greatly; in fact, one may tend to overuse this asset. In game terms, little will be lost. But the gamer must realize that in real terms, the use of smoke as a screening device also has the tendency to reveal to the enemy that there is something in the sector being screened that is important.

For a newcomer to computer wargaming, input and action are easily learned and enjoyed. However, for the more advanced gamer, this reviewer has serious reservations concerning the value of the simulation. As the documentation notes, "Force structure pretty accurately reflect the actual forces of the three nations. Please note that the strength of a US battalion will be reduced by about 20% when opposing a Soviet battalion and 50% when opposing a Chinese battalion.... The purpose of these reductions is to provide play balance between forces of differing intrinsic strengths." Also, reductions are made in Sino-Soviet confrontations. Similarly, the designer has modified the TOE (Table of Organization and Equipment) for a mechanized infantry company. He notes "Hopefully, my adjustments do not result in a significant distortion of reality." But the adjustments do in fact distort reality considerably. US military doctrine does not call for battalions to engage battalions; US battalions plan to engage regiments. By reducing strengths to make the situation playable, the designer has defaulted any attempt to render military doctrine applicable.

Thus, although the playability of the game remains high, any semblance to reality is tenuous at best. For the advanced gamer, lessons learned herein will be incorrect at best. But, one must remember that the game is rated as introductory, and for the novice wargamer, this simulation is interesting and highly playable. The terrain options and different situations offer a multitude of play. Overall, a recommended product for the novice, but a simulation to be avoided by the serious gamer.

Scuttlebutt: SSI has released PANZER GRENADIER, a Roger Damon design descended from OPERATION WHIRLWIND and FIELD OF FIRE. Proposed future releases include USAAF (daylight bomber offensive over Germany, 1943-45) in December and ANTIETAM (the Civil War battle) in January. Microprose is rushing to complete its CONFLICT IN VIETNAM, 1954-1972. This reviewer has been actively involved in the playtesting of this product for historical accuracy. In fact, on 23 November, the designer (Ed Bever) and this reviewer met with several experts in this area (including two army general officers) for an in-depth playtesting session. See Computer Gaming World (March-April 1986) for complete details.

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ATARI SCUTTLEBITS*by Bob Kelly*

This month's column will complete the Christmas product reviews by examining Atari hardware available for your buying spree, take an initial look into where the major competition within the micro-computer market may occur in 1986, and share some thoughts on what has to be considered the most misleading Atari related news report for 1985.

Outlook - 1986

One of the most over used phrases in 1985 within the computer industry as well as the press has been "targeting the small business market." In usage, this phrase has grown at a geometric rate while IBM's penetration of the business market increased only at an arithmetical rate (Ricardo's Law applied to the electronic's industry). Nevertheless, as small computer manufacturers were squeezed out of the Fortune 500 market, these firms, if they survived, had to revise their market strategies - e.g. pursue the small business customer.

Andy Rooney, the CBS commentator, might say about this situation, "Have you ever seen a small business market or do you know where it lives?" A significant number of computer manufacturers are hoping they know where the small business customer does reside in 1986 - their survival may depend on it.

Some of the firms either directly or indirectly in competition for the small business/home market are; Apple, Atari, Commodore, Tandy (TRS-80), and Texas Instruments to mention only a few. Illustrative of the reasoning of these firms are comments by Mr. Roach, President of Tandy Corporation, which appeared in the Wall Street Journal in early November:

Later this month, Tandy plans to start selling its model 3000 personal computer, which is compatible with and meant to compete with IBM's high performance AT model.... But instead of aiming at Fortune 500 companies -- the main market for such machines -- Tandy will focus on selling the 3000 to work-at-home individuals and small businesses which have been buying Tandy's other IBM compatible models.

The logic of the statement is inescapable. However, the higher order question is how many firms might survive the competition in 1986 for what is essentially a limited market? Is Atari positioned well for the battle ahead? Right now, it's hard to provide a definitive answer to this question. For the moment, let's me hedge and say if a range of home entertainment, home finance, and small business software is available within the next six months for the 520ST, Atari's influence and sales will definitely rise. In 1986, this is the market where the action is -- IBM owns the corporate computer market.

The Non-Story of 1985

In the summer of 1985, Apple Computer threatened legal action against Digital Research Inc. (DRI), over its Graphics Environmental Manager (GEM) system on the grounds it infringed on the patents for Apple's Macintosh visual interface. The GEM system is the most distinctive software feature of the new Atari 520ST. In September, an agreement was reached between Apple and DRI. InfoWorld reported on the agreement (Oct. 7) in what surely has to be characterized as the school of scare-them-to-death journalism. The article stated:

The agreement also throws into doubt the future of GEM -- which DRI has identified as key to its corporate strategy -- as well as prospects for several software companies now developing applications to run under GEM.

In other words, the world, as we know it, may soon end for DRI, software companies working with GEM, and by implication Atari.

Soon after, I attended several Atari user group meetings and this was the number one topic of discussion. Many felt that the future of the 520ST was in doubt. I stated that I believed it to be a non-issue since Apple was challenging GEM's visual screen presentation, not a fundamental concept which would involve substantive programming changes. In any event, the debate was hot and heavy at the user group level. The uncertainty most likely made a number of people reconsider whether to buy an Atari 520ST.

The next step in the saga was a very interesting report by John Dvorak "Inside Track" on the back page of the October 28 issue of InfoWorld:

My sources tell me that Jack Tramiel isn't going to let Apple stop Atari from using an interface largely designed and standardized by the Xerox Star [original development work for icon plus other novel concepts was at Xerox's Palo Alto Research Center]. It's apparent that the whole Apple ploy is aimed at the Atari 520ST (GEM licensees) and not DRI.... DRI rolled over as if it didn't have a prayer. This was done in the face of failed lawsuit after failed lawsuit made against Pac-Man clones.

So Tramiel will sue [if Apple does not back off] to keep the interface the way it is; with him, I understand (unconfirmed), will be Texas Instruments with its deep pockets....

The most recent report in this un-event was another front page headline in InfoWorld on November 11, 1985. It stated that DRI had submitted to Apple its changes to GEM and DRI believes no further alterations would be required. Apple, for its part, said they were studying the changes to see if they were sufficient (who is kidding who?). Further, DRI officials say existing applications (programs) written for GEM will not have to be redone in

order to work on the back page with the modified desktop (GEM). So all that has changed is the look of the front screen? Who would have guessed at this outcome?

The way this event was handled by InfoWorld makes me wonder if anyone does research prior to writing anymore. Facts were confused in the early October issue (this is a generous interpretation) and little has been done since to clarify the situation in any analytical manner. How many people bought another computer or indefinitely delayed the purchase of an Atari ST because of the way this story was handled? How many software developers delayed ST programs that otherwise may have been available for Christmas?

Hardware Review

In talking about hardware, I will concentrate largely upon the computers themselves. In the 8-bit market, the 130XE is well worth the price. I have checked local retail outlets and software designed for this machine is now on the shelves. If you intend to stay with your 8-bit investment, then without doubt invest the roughly \$135 for a 130XE. In conjunction with Atari 8-bit computer line (XE/XL), the ATR 8000 remains in the best-buy category. If you have need to run WordStar, DBase II, or a host of other commercial business software, the ATR 8000 is the way to go (CP/M 2.2). I have both computers and am pleased with the way they have performed. Incidentally, I installed Omnimon XE/XL in my 130XE so that I don't have to use the Translator disk to run my older 800 software.

It also provided me with a machine language monitor. If you do upgrade to a 130XE or even if you already own one, I recommend Omnimon XE/XL highly.

If you are interested in the 16-bit market, the 520ST awaits. I saw this machine demonstrated at Atarifest. The graphics are awesome. It was faster than a speeding bullet! However, it could not leap tall buildings.

The uncertainty governing the purchase of a 520ST is the limited software base at present. Early reports from COMDEX indicate that more top quality ST programs will become available in late December/January time frame. What advice do I have to give? The cautious buyer will wait. Those that don't mind some risk and want in on the ground floor should write Santa because the machines are going fast.

Remember, these products as well as the software discussed in last month's column are available at local Atari retail outlets at very competitive prices. I know owners of non-Atari computers who have said that they wish they had available to them such local stores as STS Video, L & Y Electronics, ACA, Diskcovery and The Program Store. It's the people that make these stores (hi, Susie). Support them with your purchases permitting them also to enjoy the holiday.

I wish you a Happy Hannukah, Merry Christmas, and the best for the New Year. See you in February.

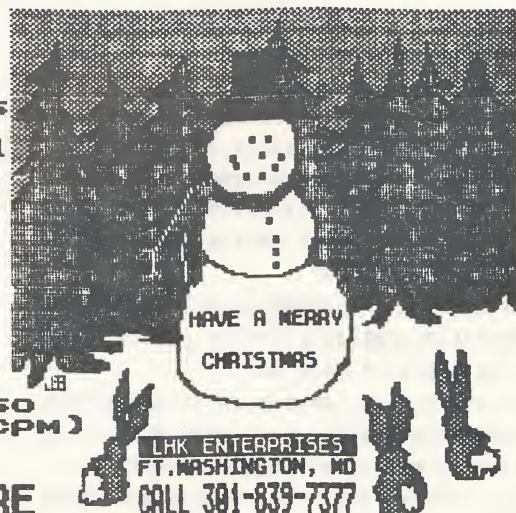
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HAPPY NEW YEAR

Atari's Small Miracles

by Mark A. Brown

Welcome back to Atari's Small Miracles, the column dedicated to short programs of all types. Last month we saw some programs that created abstract art; useless and bizarre things that were interesting to watch. This month we'll go to the opposite end of the spectrum, utility programs. These help you program in BASIC. They make working on the computer a little easier, a little less nerve wracking, and let you live a happier life. On to the programs!

TINYMENU

This seven line beauty is a simple menu program. It prints the files and programs stored on a disk and runs the one you choose. While not claiming to be original, it is unique in that it's only seven lines and it's the only one I know of that can print up to sixty-four filenames on to the screen. The program only works with file names compatible with DOS 2.05 (i.e. eight characters with a three character extender).

When run, it reads the file names into a string then prints them to the screen in three columns. To the left of the file names are characters printed in inverse (to stand out). When you see the words "Your choice?" at the bottom of the screen, look for the file you would like to run and press the key of the character next to that file. If it is a BASIC program it will be run, if not a message will appear at the bottom of the screen telling you so and will ask you to choose another file.

Programs like this are great for remembering what is on a disk or if you can't remember how a file name is spelled. It's not a bad idea to keep a copy on every programming disk for convenience. I do.

```
10 GRAPHICS 0:POKE 752,1:OPEN #1,4,0,"
K:":DIM F1$(800),F2$(17),F3$(20):OPEN
#2,6,0,"D:*.":POKE 752,1:Z=0
20 INPUT #2,F2$:IF F2$(5,10)<"FREE 5"
THEN Z=Z+1:F1$(Z*12-11,Z*12)=F2$(3,14)
):F1$(Z*12,Z*12)=CHR$(155):GOTO 20
30 FOR A=0 TO Z-1:Y=INT(A/3):X=A-3*Y:POSITION 13*X+1,Y:CHR$(A+176);F1$(A*12+1,A*12+12):NEXT A
40 CLOSE #2:POSITION 2,23:CHR$(156);
CHR$(127);CHR$(127);"Your choice?":GET #1,A:A=A-47:TRAP 40
50 F2$=F1$((A-1)*12+1,(A-1)*12+12):F3$="D:":FOR X=1 TO 8:IF F2$(X,X)<" " THEN F3$(LEN(F3$)+1)=F2$(X,X):NEXT X
60 F3$(LEN(F3$)+1)=".":F3$(LEN(F3$)+1)=F2$(9,11):TRAP 70:CHR$(156);CHR$(127);"RUNNING ";F3$:RUN F3$
70 ? CHR$(156);CHR$(127);CHR$(253);CHR$(253);" CANNOT RUN ";F3$:FOR T=1 TO 500:NEXT T:GOTO 40
```

CHEAPREN

This program is also not fairly original, however that does not decrease its usefulness. It's a very simple renumbering program; all it does is renumber lines; no references are changed such as line numbers following GOTOs, GOSUBs, TRAPs, etc. Many programs exist to renumber and to change references, however they all exceed ten lines (the limit for this column).

To use this program first type it in, then LIST it (not SAVE) to disk under a convenient file name. Load up the program you want to renumber, ENTER this program and type "GOTO 32760". The program will prompt you "From, By?" at which point you should answer how you want to renumber the program :from what line number and by what increment. The program will be finished in a short time and the words "READY AND WAITING" will appear followed by some numbers. Those numbers correspond to the line numbers of CHEAPREN and if you want to erase it (leaving the original program intact) just press the RETURN key three times.

A brief explanation: using the two byte pointer STMTAB (at 136 decimal, \$88 hex) CHEAPREN finds the beginning of the BASIC program in memory. It goes through the whole program line by line (the third byte in each line is what you have to add to the current line pointer to get the next) and simply pokes in new line numbers. Simple, quick, and effective.

```
32700 ? CHR$(125);"CheapRen: Number from, by what?":INPUT F,B:P=PEEK(136)+256*PEEK(137):? :? :FOR A=F TO 32700 STEP B
32710 IF PEEK(P+1)<127 THEN ? "Ln#";A;"/";N=INT(A/256):L=A-256*N:POKE P,L:POKE P+1,N:P=P+PEEK(P+2):NEXT A
32720 ? :? :? (A-F)/B;" lines":? :? "READY AND WAITING TO SERVE YOU":? 32700: ? 32710: ? 32720: ? "+++++":END
```

MLSORT

Have you ever had a list of items stored on the computer you wanted sorted (arranged in a certain order, like alphabetically?) Have you tried to do the sort in BASIC? Did you notice how slowly it went? The solution has arrived, a machine language sort! MLSORT is an all machine program (put into BASIC data statements) that sorts any number of items in memory quickly. Type in the program, renumber it (you can even use the CHEAPREN program given above) and put it into a program. Whenever you need a list of items sorted do the following USER call:

```
JUNK=USR(ADR(SORT$),TABLE,NUMBER,LENGTH,[BEGKEY, ENDKEY])
```


BASIC XL COMMUNICATIONS

by Eric Alchowiak

A powerful communications program such as AMODEM71 oftentimes presents a bewildering array of user options. The casual bulletin board "browser" is frequently interested in just reading and saving message text files as easily as possible. The program XLTERM.BAS provides just such a capability in a compact, efficient package that is especially easy to use.

Most communication programs that are written using BASIC incorporate machine language routines in order to handle the actual data transfer. This is because BASIC is usually too slow to keep up with even a 300 BAUD modem. XLTERM.BAS, however, is written entirely in BASIC and avoids this problem in a number of ways. First, it's extremely short—just 10 lines (with the first four doing most of the work). Secondly, the "working part" is kept at the beginning so that BASIC doesn't have to spend a lot of time searching for lines. Lastly, it's written in BASIC XL (from O.S.S.) which is inherently faster and more efficient than the BASIC provided by ATARI. XLTERM.BAS keeps up easily at 300 BAUD. I haven't tested it at any other speeds since I do not have a faster modem although operation at 1200 BAUD would be unlikely.

The program's operation is simple if not entirely a good example of structured programming practice. In this case, readability had to be sacrificed in exchange for speed. Line 1 places the BASIC XL cartridge into the FAST mode in order to take advantage of improved processing of GOTO and branching statements. After the screen is cleared, the flow is transferred to lines 9 and 10 which set up variables and open the appropriate input/output channels for data transfer. Notice that the string A\$ is set up as the buffer area for saving incoming text. Its size depends on the amount of free memory accesable to BASIC XL.

Lines 2 through 4 carry the bulk of the communications load. Line 2 has three functions to perform. If data is coming in over the modem line, it directs it to line 3 where it is displayed and saved in A\$ (if the buffer is turned on). If the user is entering data into the keyboard, the keyboard output is sent out to the modem. If neither is happening, flow is transferred to line 4 to check if any of the three console keys (START, SELECT, or OPTION) are pressed.

If the START key is activated, control passes to line 6 where the buffer state is changed (ON to-OFF or OFF-to-ON) and the buffer status message is displayed. The SELECT is used to prompt the user for a FILESPEC in order to save, display or print the buffer data. Lastly, the OPTION key erases the buffer contents.

To use XLTERM.BAS, you will need an 850 interface, the "R:" handler (which is called the AUTORUN.SYS file) contained on your original DOS 2.0 disk, a BASIC XL cartridge from O.S.S. and a 300 baud modem (and cable). Copy DOS and the special AUTORUN.SYS file onto a new disk. Type in XLTERM.BAS and save it on the disk. Re-boot the computer in order to load the AUTORUN.SYS file and RUN

"D:XLTERM.BAS". You should receive the buffer size, buffer state and TERMINAL OK messages. Next, dial up and begin receiving.

If you would like to save incoming data, press START to get the BUFFER ON message and hit RETURN in order to activate. Anything received after hitting RETURN is saved until START is again pressed and the BUFFER OFF prompt is displayed followed by another RETURN.

Hitting SELECT generates the FILESPEC= message. By entering E:, you can view the contents of the buffer on the screen, entering P: sends the contents to a printer while entering D:NAME.EXT sends the buffer file to the disk drive under the heading NAME.EXT. You can repeat this procedure as often as you like without erasing the buffer. An invalid filespec generates a clever INVALID FILESPEC message but does not affect the buffer contents.

Once you are finished with the buffer, pressing OPTION will generate the ERASE BUFFER prompt. Hitting the RETURN key irretrievably erases the buffer. If you should change your mind, typing in NO or anything else followed by RETURN aborts the erase process and generates the BUFFER SAFE message to reassure you that the buffer contents are OK.

That summarizes the program flow and operation. If you should develop any enhancements or have any suggestions or comments, I would appreciate hearing about them. Leave a message on ARMUDIC addressed to me if you do.

XLTERM.BAS

```

1 Fast :? Chr$(125):Goto 8:Rem (C)1985
, ERIC ALCHOWIAK, (BASIC XL)
2 Status #5,A: If Not Peek(747): If
  Peek(764)<255:Get #1,A:Put #5,A:Goto
2:Else :Goto 4:Endif :Endif
3 Get #5,A:D$=Chr$(A): If A>31: D$,:
  If B:A$=A$,D$:Goto 2:Else :Goto 2:En
dif :Else :Goto 2:Endif
4 On Peek(53279) Goto 2,2,5,2,7,6,2
5 Input "BUFFER CLEAR?",B$: If Len(B$
)=0:A$="":Close #5:Goto 10:Else :? "BU
FFER SAFE":Goto 2:Endif
6 ? : If B:B=0:Input "BUFFER OFF",B$:
Goto 2:Else :B=1:Input "BUFFER ON",B$:
Goto 2:Endif
7 Trap 9: ? :B$="":Close #5:Input "FILE
SPEC=",B$:Open #2,B,O,B$: ? #2:A$:B=0:G
oto 10
8 A=Fre(0)-100:Dim R$(2),A$(A),B$(15),
D$(1):Open #1,4,O,"K:":R$="R:":? "BUFF
ER=";A: ? "BUFFER OFF":Goto 10
9 ? "INVALID FILESPEC":Trap 40000
10 Close #2:Open #5,13,O,R$:Xio 40,#5,
0,0,R$: ? "TERMINAL OK":Goto 2:End

```


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NEW PRODUCTS**By Jack Holtzhauer**

As usual, this column is devoted to new products for the Atari actually appearing on dealer's shelves. And some real goodies have made it. Owner's of 130XE's will be pleased to learn that 128K versions of SynCalc, Synfile and PaperClip are finally available. AtariWriter Plus? Still to come, but it actually exists -- see article elsewhere in this issue of CURRENT NOTES. Also, XLENT Software has released another useful "printware" product, Broderbund strikes again with Graphics Library #3, and Adventure International has a new (?) golf game for rainy-day duffers. Except where obvious, descriptions and claims are those provided by the manufacturer.

SYNFILE+ 130XE VERSION
SYN CALC 130XE VERSION

[Synapse/Broderbund, 5221 Central Avenue,
Richmond, VA 94804, 415/479-1120]

The long-awaited 128K version of Synfile+, the most popular Atari database program, arrived at local dealers during mid-November. How does it differ from previously released versions? Only in memory capacity. But what a difference. I have one 160-record file indexed on four fields with a total index length of 16. (The length of the index file (Filename.IDX), which has the most direct impact on memory capacity, is a function of the number of records, the number of fields indexed and the total length of the indexed characters.) In the standard 48K version, the file has a capacity of 317 records. In the recently released 64K version, capacity expands to 587 records, an increase of 85%. But the new 128K issue can handle 2,967 records, an increase of a whopping 835-percent! Who needs a database to handle a file that large? How 'bout CURRENT NOTE's subscriber list. Maybe not yet, but we're getting there!

What's new with SynCalc, the only spreadsheet for the Atari worth mentioning? Again, no new features that I know of, but the standard 48K version allows you only about 21K for programming. The 130XE version? Would you settle for a 400% increase to 84K? I will, at least until something better comes along.

Both of these products are priced at \$39.99. To be honest, SynCalc may not be available at your local dealer as yet. But those of you who own the 48K version can get the new update by sending your old program disk to Synapse with a check for \$10.00. Likewise with Synfile+. You can write to Synapse at the above address.

PAPERCLIP 130XE VERSION

Batteries Included, 17875 Sky Park North,
Suite P, Irving, CA 92714, 416/881-9816

Batteries Included has also released a 130XE version of PAPERCLIP. The packaging is exactly the same as used for the older release, except for the "130XE" sticker, so I guess the only difference may be file capacity. Most of

the other bugs reported in CN/Jul85 were apparently fixed in prior revisions.

Priced at \$49.99. Like Synapse, Batteries Included is offering upgrades to current owners for their old disk and \$10.00. If interested, you can reach BI at the address given above.

COPYALL XE/XL

By Bruce Blake. Order from Atari Power & Light, c/o Mr. W. Price, 126 Casmar Street, S.E., Vienna, VA 22180.

CopyAll XE/XL is said to be a fast disk sector copier that takes full advantage of the additional RAM in the Atari 130XE. "CopyAll is menu driven, easy to use, and a time saver that copies single density disks in one pass, double density in two. One of the main features of CopyAll XE/XL, in the single density mode, is its ability to make additional copies without re-reading the source disk (just the thing for user group librarians). The program will automatically identify the density of the source disk and produce a corresponding single or double density copy.

The menu allows you to identify both the source and destination drives, and to toggle on/off both destination drive formatting and write verification. The program does not handle Atari's 1050 density-and-a-half.

Priced at \$14.75, this program is written by Bruce Blake, a member of the National Capital Atari Users' Group, one of the local groups associated with WAACE.

PRINT SHOP
GRAPHICS LIBRARY #3

Broderbund Software, 17 Paul Drive, San Rafael, CA 94903-2101

Looking for another set of graphic images to use with your PRINT SHOP program or, for that matter, with some of XLENT Software's printware (see below)? This new release, priced at \$19.99, has another 120 icons covering almost every need from Mastercard/VisaCard images to yard sale signs. No parent with kids in school (cookie sales, PTA meetings, etc.) should be without it.

RUBBER STAMP

XLENT Software, P.O. Box 5228, Springfield, VA 22150, 703/644-8881

Linda and Mike Barnes of XLENT Software must actually be sending royalty checks to Len Dorfman, Dennis Young and Randy Dellinger 'cause these three young fellows have come up with another "creativity" package for the Barnes' printware series. As all "CURRENT NOTES" readers must know by now, these folks (plus or minus one or two), have previously given us MEGAFONT II, PAGE DESIGNER and the first 130XE productivity package - TYPESETTER.

RUBBER STAMP offers five printware utilities:

- a character set text editor which allows you to change font styles and sizes;
- a graphics editor which loads graphics 7+ and 8 screens and TYPESETTER icons and, among other things, allows them to be altered, squeezed, stretched, and copied, etc.;
- a special 16x16 character set editor which allows you to design or alter character sets in an ultra-high resolution 256-dot format;
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- and, finally, you say you've been wishing you could use some of those nifty PRINT SHOP graphic icons on your TYPESETTER/PAGE DESIGNER products. Just use the CONVERT ICON utility from the main menu.

Price at \$29.99. What else can XLENT Software do for us? I'd sure like to see a picture of Jennifer Brabson!

MAXIGOLF

Adventure International, Box 3435, Longwood, FL 32750

This new release from a software house that hasn't been heard from recently claims to be an "incredibly realistic golf simulation for 1 to 4 players . . . with many features (allowing you to) alter your stance, choose any variation of club, change the swing speed and add a hook or slice to the ball. . ." Add a hook or a slice? Good Grief! I've spent thirty years trying to get rid of mine. Two "pre-made" courses are available. And you can use the "COURSE DESIGNER" to create and design the "course of your dreams." Now that's a feature I can really use. How 'bout a par 22/thirty yard seventh hole?

Although bearing a copyright date of 1984, one software vendor swears this one is just off the press. Priced at \$25.99.

CROSSWORD MAGIC

Mindscape Inc., 3444 Dundee Road, Northbrook, Ill. 60062

Created by MINDSCAPE, a subsidiary of SFN, "one of the nation's leading educational publishers for close to a hundred years -- CROSSWORD MAGIC takes a national classic into the technological age. If you're one of the millions of people who enjoy crossword puzzles, you can now, with speed and ease, create and play original puzzles. Create, edit, play, print - all you do is choose the words; your computer does the work. Challenge yourself or stump others. Create clever cards, announcements, or invitations."

Priced at \$39.99, I'm told that this program is one of the Atari products most frequently used by the Fairfax County school system.

RAMDISK ON 800XL AND PROGRAMS

By Larry Nocella

(Reprinted from the OCT/85 edition of BETWEEN BYTES, the journal of the Jersey Atari Computer Society)

Getting a ramdisk on a 64K XL computer:

1. Boot with DOS 2.5 and BASIC
2. POKE 1802,PEEK(1802)+128
3. Type: DOS and hit RETURN
4. Write DOS using function "H"

Now you are ready to use your ramdisk. For some reason, binary loading "RAMDISK.COM" is unnecessary on the XL's. RUNNING the BASIC program (below) will create an AUTORUN.SYS file that will automatically format the ramdisk (D8:), so you won't have to go to DOS and do it manually. REMEMBER the ramdisk has only 101 sectors. If you go over that, the whole ramdisk will mess up. Once you use the program below and the technique above, you can do your usual ramdisk customizations (see below) or just use the disk as a buffer while programming. Also, this ramdisk will work without BASIC!. Now there's no need to do that annoying POKE and FORMAT sequence (CN Ed. Note: frequently seen in other XL ramdisk routines).

If you hate waiting for DOS to LOAD up, just write DOS to D8:. Return to BASIC. Type: POKE 5439,56. Then when you type DOS, the menu will appear in a second! Delete D8:DOS.SYS, to save ramdisk room. They you can write a MEN.SAV file. But watch out! Don't go over 101 sectors, or bye bye ramdisk.

HAVE FUN!

```

10 REM *** FORMAT D8: AUTORUN ***
15 REM *** FOR XL RAMDISK ***
17 REM *** by Larry Nocella ***
20 OPEN #1,8,0,"D:AUTORUN.SYS": TRAP 50
30 READ X:IF X=-1 THEN 50
40 PUT #1,X:GOTO 30
50 CLOSE #1:END
100 DATA 255,255,0,96,43,96,162,32
110 DATA 169,254,157,66,3,169,39,157
120 DATA 68,3,169,96,157,69,3,169
130 DATA 0,157,74,3,157,75,3,32
140 DATA 86,228,173,10,7,24,216,105
150 DATA 128,141,10,7,96,68,56,58
160 DATA 155,0,224,2,255,2,0,96
170 DATA -1

```

FINAL NOTE: If you already have an AUTORUN.SYS file, you can change line 20 in the BASIC program to:

```

20 CLOSE #1: OPEN #1,8,0,"D:RAMDISK.COM":TRAP 50

```


Learning Through LOGO*by Susan Wolff***LOGO: An Alternative to Word Processing for Young Children**

One of the mistakes that some parents and educators are apt to make when introducing children to word processing, is trying to teach them options at the outset.

I've worked with many young children, using both Atari Writer and Bank Street Writer, and observed their needs. Most children prefer writing a quick rough draft before they go to the computer, so their thoughts are already largely organized. Very few prefer composing at the keyboard. I have yet to see a student move blocks of text, or need to use any of the more advanced features of these programs. Children basically need to "delete back" to erase a letter or word, or use the control and arrow keys to go back and correct a mistake.

Once a child has been shown a few of the simple editing features he/she ought to be allowed to begin using the word processor. From that point on the student should only be shown new features on a need to know basis. If he/she wishes to center a word or title, show him/her how. If a child is writing paragraphs then it's time to learn how to indent. Don't inundate your child with a lot of extra features before he/she begins.

As an alternative to word processing, however, or perhaps as a pre-word processing experience, I would like to suggest to you that you consider LOGO for your children. If I haven't already convinced you to run out and get LOGO in my previous discussions of problem solving and critical thinking with LOGO, perhaps this new application will do it.

Imagine a word processor that will allow children to write stories and draw pictures to illustrate their stories. Then they watch their stories and pictures unfold screen by screen on the monitor. They print out their stories and dump their illustrations to the printer.

Each part of a story is edited or revised in the LOGO editor. Pictures are easily modified. Additions or deletions of sections are easily accomplished.

LOGO as a word processor can accomplish all this. In addition, children can even write interactive stories, as in the example that follows. What word processor can do all that and also expose your child to a very success-oriented programming language? Consequently LOGO may be worth considering for the whole family's thought processing, and your child's word processing!

```
TO G.2
PU RT 90 FD 50
REPEAT 7 [PD FD 34 RT 56 HT]
END
```

```
TO ARC
HT
SETBG 0
HT
RT 45 RT 90 PU FD 100 PD
REPEAT 10 [BK 20 LT 10]
PU REPEAT 5 [FD 20 RT 10]
PUTSH 1 :PERSON SETSH 1 ST
WAIT 60
FD 70 FD 100
RT 90 FD 100
PD
END
```

```
TO OVER
PR [IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO START OVER TYPE
SHRINKING THEN PRESS RETURN.]
END
```

```
TO B
CT
PR []
PR []
PR [YOU DECIDE TO BE FRIENDLY WITH THE
MARTIAN. IT ASKS YOU TO STAY WITH IT
FOREVER. YOU SAY, "OK".]
REPEAT 5 [PR []]
PR [THE END]
WAIT 100
COL
SETBG 74
REPEAT 3 [PR []]
OVER
END
```

```
TO R
SS
ARC
WAIT 60
TS CT
PR []
PR []
PR [YOU GET SCARED OF THE MARTIAN AND YOU
DECIDE TO RUN AWAY. YOU RUN SO FAR THAT
YOU FALL OFF THE SIDE OF THE PLANET AND
LAND ON A STAR. YOU ARE LOST FOREVER.]
REPEAT 5 [PR []]
PR [THE END]
WAIT 100
COL
SETBG 74
REPEAT 3 [PR []]
OVER
END
```



TO S
CT
PR []
PR []
PR [YOU DECIDE TO STAY ON. YOU FLY TO AN
UNKNOWN PLANET. WHEN YOU GET THERE YOU
MEET A MARTIAN.]

PR []
PR []
PR [WILL YOU RUN AWAY OR WILL YOU BE
FRIENDLY WITH IT ?]
PR []
PR [PRESS R IF YOU RUN AWAY OR B IF YOU
WILL BE FRIENDLY WITH IT, THEN PRESS
RETURN.]
MAKE "ANSWER FIRST RL
IF :ANSWER = "R [R] [B]
END

TO COL
REPEAT 12 [SETBG RANDOM 128]
END

TO G.1
CS
SETBG 0
SETPC 0 7
PU
FD 120
PD RT 90 FD 20 RT 90 FD 50
LT 45 FD 60 RT 90 RT 45
FD 100 RT 45 RT 45 RT 45 FD 50
LT 45 FD 50
PU BK 50 RT 90 FD 10 PD
REPEAT 36 [FD 1 RT 10]
RT 270 LT 90 PU LT 90 FD 10 PD FD 17
RT 45 FD 10 BK 10 LT 90 FD 10
PU BK 17 LT 45 BK 5 PD FD 20
WAIT 200
CS TS
END

TO W
CT TS
SETBG 0
PR [YOU DECIDE TO STAY AND WAIT FOR HELP.
YOU WAIT FOR AN HOUR AND A CAT COMES AND
KNOCKS YOU AND THE BOTTLE DOWN A FLIGHT
OF STAIRS. YOU LAND IN A GARBAGE
DISPOSAL AND YOU ARE LOST FOREVER.
REPEAT 7 [PR []]
PR [THE END]
PR []

PR []
WAIT 300
COL
SETBG 74
OVER
END



TO Y
CT SS
SETBG 0
G.1
WAIT 100
PR [YOU YELL SO LOUD THAT YOU BREAK THE
GLASS BOTTLE AND FALL INTO SOME
TOOTH PASTE AND YOU GROW BACK TO YOUR
NORMAL SIZE. THE END]
WAIT 100
COL
SETBG 74
OVER
END

TO J
CT
PR []
PR []
PR [YOU ARE FLYING AND YOU DECIDE TO
JUMP. YOU LAND IN A GLASS BOTTLE. YOU
DON'T KNOW WHAT TO DO.]
PR [WILL YOU WELL OR WILL YOU WAIT FOR
HELP?]
PR []
PR [TYPE Y FOR YELL OR W FOR WAIT, THEN
PRESS RETURN.]
PR []
MAKE "ANSWER FIRST RL
IF :ANSWER = "Y [Y] [W]
END

TO CIRC
HT
REPEAT 40 [FD 68 RT 190 SETPC 0 RANDOM
128 SETBG RANDOM 128]
END

TO SETUP
SETBG 74
TS CT
PR []
PR []

PR [YOU ARE WALKING ALONG THE SIDEWALK. YOU TRIP
OVER YOUR SHOELACE AND FALL INTO A PUDDLE OF CHEMICALS.
YOU SHRINK DOWN TO THE SIZE OF A PEANUT. SUDDENLY YOU

SEE A PAPER AIRPLANE. IT'S COMING TOWARD
YOU. IT SWEEPS YOU UP. NOW YOU CAN GO
OFF ON AN UNKNOWN FLIGHT.]

PR []

PR []

PR [WILL YOU JUMP OR STAY ON?]

PR []

PR [TYPE J TO JUMP OR S TO STAY ON PRESS
RETURN.]

END

TO INTRO

CT TS CIRC WAIT 60

PR [WELCOME TO YOUR SKRINKING ADVENTURE!]

PR []

PR [BY JOHANNA STUDER, JENNIFER WHELAN
AND ANDREA SMITH.]

WAIT 600

TS CT CS

END

TO SHRINKING

CT

INTRO

SETUP

END

TO C1

REPEAT 36 [FD 1 RT 10]

END

MAKE "PERSON [28 20 20 28 8 8 62 8 8 20

34 65 0 0 0 0]

MAKE "ANSWER "Y



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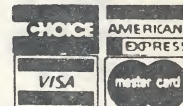


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GameViewsby **Bob Gaffney****POWERSTAR**

[Pandora Software, North Andover, MA, Priced at \$19.95. Bob Gaffney is filling in for Roland Gabeler this month - ed.]

PowerStar is the first offering from an imaginative group of engineers who've incorporated under the Pandora name. It is not only the title of an enticing new graphic-text adventure; it is as well a description of the company!

In the 21st century all the earth's energy is provided by a single nuclear fusion reactor, isolated on a satellite for safety and security reasons. Everyone appears content until all communications with the PowerStar cease abruptly without explanation. You enter the adventure at a government airfield and, using common sense, logic, and anything that isn't nailed down (but not necessarily in that order), must struggle through a variety of puzzles and mindgames. A couple of animated opponents (like the resident engineer who sabotaged the vital electrical space station) add thrilling challenges as well as frustration to this playful romp through space.

The game format is entirely new for a word- or graphic-text adventure: a 16k-ROM cartridge. Because it is a cartridge, response to commands is instantaneous. Additionally, all four directions of any scene can be viewed by simply tapping the appropriate <arrow> key, the first letter of the direction to be viewed, or moving a joystick. Complete or partial english language command sentences are permissible but caution should be exercised with verbs. The program ridiculed what I thought was a perfectly reasonable command until I rephrased the command in such a way as not to violate it's perception of grammar. Mark Twain once wrote a terrific story about the difficulties he had learning "That Damned German Language". When computers create and analyze, we will be treated to an unlovely companion piece about the frustrations of having to deal with english as a second language from our machines.

Another powerful feature of this delightful program is the ability to SAVE one's progress to a formatted disk and continue the adventure without missing meals, ball games, or family. As a novice, I ran into difficulties early on because I tried to grab, kick, steal, or eat everything in sight. When I found out the program was written by an engineer, and every problem had a perfectly logical solution I began to pay closer attention to the more subtle clues offered in almost every screen. I had some trouble getting into orbit (that's a little out of sequence - I had trouble getting off the landing strip! If this had been real-life, we'd all be rubbing sticks together this winter for heat!). Once you leave earth (the sound and graphics of the heavens reminded me of Halley's Project), you are beginning to think more efficiently and begin to better anticipate your needs. If you haven't be-

gun mapping by this time, you should SAVE your game immediately or be forced to start all over again when you encounter unfamiliar obstacles or when you can't resist the temptation to be cute with some of the equipment you encounter. I was dumped out of the program (without even a score!) and deposited at the starting point when I thought an important clue might be cleverly concealed in an innocuous (but to all of us, irresistible) machine. Turned out I was too smart for my own good. Had I SAVED my progress? No, of course not. But I had made maps on strong advice from the programmer and recovery was rapid and simple due to the speed of dealing with a cartridge.

I haven't solved the PowerStar...yet! I've built up a grudge against one of the opponents and I won't recognize any further progress until I get even. That'll really "make my day."

This isn't the most difficult adventure around but it serves as a nice antithesis to "MitchHiker", which is almost totally illogical. I felt good when I solved puzzles or recognized important objects. PowerStar tests your powers of observation, reasoning, and endurance. My fourth and fifth grade children discovered as many clues and objects as I. I recommend PowerStar for family gaming and hope the folks at Pandora are ready to provide a sequel or at least another entertainment soon.

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HELPFUL HINTS FOR USE OF Xlent SOFTWARE

by Tom Jarrell (AURA)

Page Designer, Typesetter, and Rubber Stamp all have one thing in common, they are all products of the Xlent Software Company. Many useful things can be made using one or all of these programs. The one question that I am most often asked is HOW? This article will attempt to show an easy way to create a two column high-resolution Typesetter product using all three programs in one of the easiest possible ways. This article was prepared using the method described.

The title for this article was prepared using the Rubber Stamp program. The US flag icon was converted from the Printshop program using the icon conversion routine. Then the flag was loaded into the graphics editor where it was positioned as shown. The text was then added via the Rubber Stamp text editor, which works like the Typesetter program. The title was then saved as a screen file for later use in Page Designer.

The main body of the article was prepared using Page Designer because you can see everything that is typed on the screen and the structure is compatible with Rubber Stamp screen files, 62 sector picture files, and the Typesetter program where the printing was to be accomplished.

loading the ed using the gram. I then type font ness and I began to just below leted the saved it I began 62 sector Jennifer the robot around it. simple way in the text work. The easy.

prepare word pro- Page Designer program does not permit easy text editing without retyping all the text following the change. This preparation is part of the planning that is required in a project of this type. If you plan the text, graphics, and layout before you start, the composition and printing will go much easier. The next type of graphic insertion which I will show is done by leaving a blank space in the Page Designer file. When the file is loaded into the Typesetter program, the blank space will be filled with an icon (Hotrod) created with the Printshop graphics editor and converted to the Typesetter program using the



The typing began by title file creat- Rubber Stamp pro- selected a gothic for its unique- readability. Then type the article the title. I comp- first file and as file one. Then file two with a 62 picture created by Brabson. I loaded and began typing This is a fairly to embed a picture without a lot of typing process is However you should the text using your cessor because the

Rubber Stamp icon conversion routine.

When I finished typing the article and saving all the files it was time to move onto the Typesetter program where the printing would be done. The first step was to select the order for the Page Designer files so that they will be loaded into Typesetter in the proper sequence. Files one and three will become Typesetter file one, and files two and four will become Typesetter file two. The Page Designer files will make two columns of forty characters each when loaded into Typesetter. Step two is to bootup Typesetter and load Page Designer file one in the normal mode. The file will occupy columns 22 to 61 when using the 48K version of Typesetter. Step three is to move the file to the left using **CONTROL-P** (page shift left) until the right margin reaches column 17. This will cause the file to wrap around the left margin until half the file is on the left side of the screen and the rest of it is on the right side of the screen. This will free the center of the screen allowing me to load Page Designer file three. Step four is to move the file to the right using the **CONTROL-J** command until the left margin of file one is on column one. Save this as Typesetter file one, then print the file using the vertical half height print mode. Step five is to load Page Designer files two and four in the same manner as described above. When the files are positioned correctly, type **ESC** to return to the main menu. Select the sketch pad mode and press **START**. Type **CONTROL-L** to load the icon which will be placed into



the blank space left in the text. Using the joy stick, move the cursor to the command line selection "sketch" and press the fire button. The label will change to "main", and at this point you will be looking at a small portion of the main screen. Move the window around the main screen with the arrow keys until the blank space appears. Use the fire button to shift between the sketch pad and the main screen in order to choose the best position for the icon. When the position is set as desired, return to the sketch pad, move the cursor away from the command line, and type **CONTROL-U** to overlay the icon onto the main screen. The file is now ready to be saved as Typesetter file two and printed. The printing of Typesetter files will run one after another so do not move the paper in the printer until both files have been completed.

I think you will agree that this is an easy way to create this type of product once you have tried it yourself. Many thanks to Xlent Software, Guzick, Inc., and Bill Schadt who made this article possible.

Equipment used: Atari 800XL computer,
Atari 1050 disk drive,
Panasonic 1091 printer.

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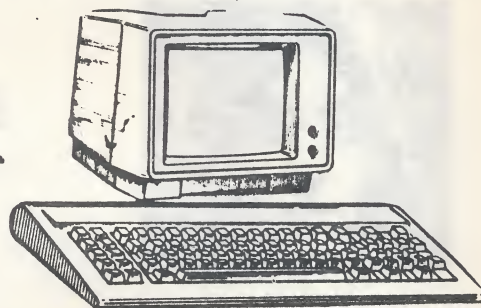
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Tips 'N Traps

Stevenson and Burke

Those of you who looked through every section of **CURRENT NOTES** last month may have noticed we skipped a month. In addition to a problem with editing, not enough messages were on ARMUDIC to give us the kind of article we wanted. As a result, this month, we have a little more. We apologize for the lapse and hope you all keep those messages coming!

P.S. -- Great news! Joe Hart's bulletin board (Joe's Attic) has now become another source for Tips 'N' Traps information through use of his "Adventure Hints" message base. It's a great board, and has about 7 message bases and 20+ functions. Check it out at (703) 471-1809. 1030 modem users are advised to use 1030 Express I or II while going on the board (which is available on ARMUDIC), or some downloads and uploads may get messed up. Anyway, here are this month's questions/answers.

HITCHIKER'S GUIDE TO THE GALAXY

Q. Does anyone know what to do in the Vagon hold? I'm really stuck!

-Jim Stevenson

A. Use the junk mail, towel, satchel, and gown. You'll also use the storm drain and the little hook in the room. Correlation-towel with storm drain, gown with hook mail with satchel with service panel.

-Dan Greenblatt

ULTIMA II

Q. I have had Ultima II for about 1 year now and have not been able to get the ring or get higher attributes. I would be very pleased if anyone gave me a clue on how to do this.

-Lord Verminaard

A. I solved Ultima II and the way to get higher attributes is to go to the Hotel in the city of San Antonio and offer the clerk money in 100's. You have to go into space and get Father Atnos's blessing before you get the ring. The coordinates for Atnos's planet are 9-9-9. Ok, now that you have gotten the blessing from father Atnos you have to go to San Antonio again. By the way, as you will find out, San Antonio has just about everything to solving the game. Well, anyhow you have to go to one place, I think it's somewhere near the top of the city and offer 500 gold to a man under the letters "A TREE". He will give you the ring. Then you have to go into the prison and offer 500 gold to one prisoner (a thief I believe) and he will give you the quicksword. Then it's off to kill Minax. As for the other questions, I don't remember the specifics of it that well.

-The Wanderer

THE HALLEY PROJECT

Q. Where or what is "CHARON"? You have to go there on the 3rd leg of the 4th rank, and I haven't a clue....

-Dean Edward Miller

A. CHARON is the moon of PLUTO. You'll find it orbiting very close to the planet.

-Paul Mattia

GEMSTONE WARRIOR

Q. Has anyone solved or come close to solving Gemstone Warrior? I've gotten all five pieces, but I can't find my way back, or know what to do. I think I have to go back to the door. I've gotten out of the pillar-gates so far. Any help?

A. You just have to find these gates and pillars that are really high compared to the rest of the pillars that you usually see. Then beyond that gate, you have to explore like the rest and find the pieces...when you find all 5, then you have to get out to the door or time door that you came in.

-The Nuker

PLANETFALL

Q. Well, I have managed to get 71 points on Planetfall and have almost finished the game...but I am stuck with a few problems. First, how do you get in the radiation lab? I can't find the suit in there, and I know that in the lab is a lantern and a brown spool. Second, how do I get out of the computer once I've blown the speck? And last, what is the object of the game???

-Sysop of ARMUDIC

A. The radiation lab is a red herring. You can't enter it and survive. A clue to the end of the game: When the monsters chase you, run for it. If you run in the right direction, you'll know what to do.

-Paul Mattia

ULTIMA III

Q. Ok, here's an 'Ultima'tun. I have heard, confirmed, that there is a secret dungeon that can only be accessed one way: In the torture chamber in Lord British's castle there is a Jester in water. Now, I know you have to enter some commands using either the 'O'ther command or 'Y'ell command (or a combination thereof) and you will be able to cross the water or something. After fighting the Jester an entrance to the dungeon will be there. What I need to know is what is the command to enter (or procedure to do it)?

-the Telecaster

A. It's been quite a while since I played Ultima III, but you have just sprung a new one on me! The only "secret" dungeon I can remember is one that you can reach only through a moon door. Naturally, you have to know which door, and which moon phases.

I seem to remember a character sitting in the middle of a lava field, which you can cross with the aid of an appropriate mark. Don't recall any way to cross water, though. Sounds like someone gave you a bum steer. It would be like Lord British to hide a funny little joke in the game.

-Richard Gunter

(Continued on Page 45)

GOING ONLINE

by Ed Seward

What better way to finish up 1985 than to provide a list of the menus used on FOREM BBS's such as ARMUDIC. All of the menus (with the exception of the Conference Selection menu which varies from board to board) apply to all FOREM BBS's. Also, this month I am going to take a look at using message bases.

Fig. 1: ARMUDIC Command Menu

```

[A]-ASCII/ATASCII  [D]-Download
[E]-Enter Message  [F]-Download Menu
[G]-Logoff          [K]-Delete Message
[M]-E-Mail          [L]-Message to Sysop
[P]-User Profile    [R]-Read/Scan Msgs
[U]-Upload          [Y]-Yell for Sysop
[Z]-Change boards
  
```

```

[*]-ARMUDIC Databases/Help
[+]-Add BBS to general list
[?]-Command Menu
  
```

Entering A Message Base or Conference

There are three ways to access a message base. Upon signing onto a FOREM BBS, like ARMUDIC, one is notified of the default conference with "ENTERING <conference name>". If this is the conference within which you wish to leave a message, then enter "E" at the "GO" prompt. If you want to read messages, then enter "R" at the "GO" prompt. These two means of accessing a conference along with the following command can be chained with other commands.

Fig. 2: ARMUDIC Conference Selection

- 1) PUBLIC OPINION
- 2) TECHNICAL KORNER
- 3) MEMBERS ONLY
- 4) ADVENTURE Q & A
- 5) WANT ADS/SALES
- 6) TELECOM SIG
- 7) D/L FILES INFO.

The third command for entering a conference is the "Z" or "Change boards" command. There are two ways to use the "Z" command at the "GO" prompt. One is to just enter "Z". This will cause the Conference Selection menu to be presented. The second is to enter "Z" and the number of a conference in the Conference Selection menu. For example, to switch to "MEMBERS ONLY" on ARMUDIC enter "Z 3".

The "Select:" Prompt

There are seven commands available from the "Select:" prompt. (See the Conference Command Menu.) Six are in

the menu. The seventh is the "Z" command which works just as it does at the "GO" prompt. Upon entering the conference you have a chance to have the board check for messages addressed to you. Next you will be told the numeric range of the active messages in this conference.

Fig. 3: Conference Command Menu

```

(R)ead
(B)rief
(C)ont
(S)end
(T)itles
(Q)uit
  
```

The "Read", "Brief" and "Titles" commands can be worked in several ways. One can just enter "R", "B" or "T". This will bring up a sub-menu. Another way is to enter the string of commands at the "Select:" prompt. Some examples are:

```

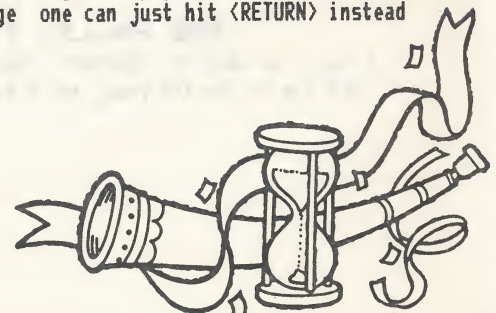
"R 210-235" - read messages 210-235
"R 90,95,110,118" - read the specified messages
"B +" - display message headers working from
         the oldest to newest
"T -" - display message subjects working from
         the newest to the oldest.
  
```

Fig. 4: Message Editor Command Summary

```

/A=Abort  /S=Save  /H or /?=Help
/T =Goto Top Of File
/B =Goto Bottom Of File
/Gnn =Goto line number nn
/Mnn =Move Line Window Down nn lines
/Unn =Move Line Window Up nn lines
/Lnn =List next nn lines
Note: Up, Down, Goto default to 1.
      List defaults to full listing
/I/S1 =Insert string (line) S1 above
       the current line
/C/S1/S2 =Replace the first occurrence of
          S1 in current line with S2
  
```

The only other "Select:" command I should explain is "C" or "Cont". This is for a continuous display of messages. This is good if you are reading large numbers of messages. However, when using the continuous message scroll in conjunction with the read command, you are not provided the "Again Reply Next Main" menu after each message. This makes it a little harder to reply to a message. Speaking of the "Again Reply Next Main" menu - to go to the next message one can just hit <RETURN> instead of "N<RETURN>".



Sending A Message

Many of you are familiar with the "/A = Abort /S = Save" commands. You may know about the other commands but hate to have your message scrolled off the screen by using the help menu. That menu is included with the other FOREM menus. Those commands are explained pretty well so I won't go into them here. Let me remind you to include the "/" as the first character of the command string. Also all commands must start in the beginning of a line.

=====

Fig. 5: Download Directory Options

C - Communications
 D - Demos/Graphics
 G - Games
 M - Music
 N - New user submitted uploads
 P - Applications software
 X - Text and Documentation
 U - Utilities
 Or 'A' for all

=====

A Note on Telecom Disk #4

This disk contains AMODEM 7.1. It also comes with documentation and handlers for most modems. NOTE: to use this disk you must change the name of the handler for your modem to AUTORUN.SYS. After doing this reboot the system.

Happy holidays.

=====

Tips'N'Traps (Continued from page 43)

ENCHANTER

Q. Ok folks--I'm going bonkers over a minor problem here. I keep running out of food and drink before i can get down to the knitty-gritty. And the adventurer is a real pain. We seem to have a communications problem. And can anybody tell me anything about the translucent rooms? I hate to think about the next two games in the series. I unfortunately used the KULCAD spell to help open the JEWELLED BOX. Now I'm stuck at the winding stair all dressed up with no place to go. Is it necessary for me to go into the temple? I found that OZMOO and MELBOR did not protect me from the evil presences. Just how powerful are these spells? Is there any way to summon KRILL and still get a chance to GUNCHD him before he does me?

-Keith Van Hulle

ADVENTURE!

Q. Ok, here's an oldie for ya. I am having problems in ADVENTURE getting the PRY BAR, DYNAMITE and the PLATENUM PYRAMID. I get about 15 items, accumulate 219 points, and can go no further. Any hints would be appreciated.

-"Opie Taylor"

DOLLARS AND CENTS IN ATARI BASIC By Fred Jansen

(Reprinted from the MACC MONTHLY (AUG/85), the newsletter of the Manitoba Atari Computer Club)

Like most versions of BASIC, Atari BASIC does not print zero values. If you work with dollar values and the cent value is zero, BASIC does not print the decimal point and the zero cent value.

For example, "\$25.00" will be printed "\$25", and this would look rather strange.

The following one-line routine will overcome this problem for dollar amounts with up to three zero decimals. The result always shows two zero values. For example, if the program has computed the following values for the numeric variable X, the converted result in a string, V\$, always shows two zero decimals:

| Example | V\$ Result |
|----------|------------|
| X=25.000 | 25.00 |
| X=25.00 | 25.00 |
| X=25.0 | 25.00 |
| x=25 | 25.00 |

Here is the one-line routine which solves the above problem:

V\$=STR\$(X+.006): V=LEN(V\$): V\$=V\$(1,V-1)

(MACC Ed. Note: Make sure you DIMension V\$ to at least 10 characters - DIM V\$(10). This line can be compressed by changing it to read:

V\$=STR\$(X+.006): V\$(LEN(V\$))=""

All this does is kill the character in the string which would be the third decimal place. Something you don't want. Also remember to pass the value to be converted in X.)

This routine also takes care of rounding in case of three decimals:

| Example | V\$ Result |
|---------|------------|
| 25.001 | 25.00 |
| 25.005 | 25.01 |
| 25.008 | 25.01 |



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Gemini SG-10 Review

by Kenn Lara

After buying my first printer two years ago, I thought all my printing needs would be fulfilled. Unfortunately, the printer I purchased was an Atari 1025. While I did put it to good use for a year, it was still a disappointment. It lacked many features which I now need in doing any serious writing. With college looming ahead, a better printer was in order.

From the very beginning I knew I wanted an Epson or Epson-compatible printer. Looking through various advertisements, I found that Epson printers were beyond my budget. Gemini printers had similar capabilities but were cheaper. So, after doing some research and discovering that they were also highly regarded, I went ahead and ordered a Gemini SG-10, their least expensive model at \$299. Within a week it arrived. The following is based on a half-year's experience with the SG-10.

First of all, I would like to discuss some technical aspects of the SG-10. It is a dot matrix printer that requires a parallel interface although a serial interface is available as an option. The print matrix is 9x11 which compares favorably with Epson and other popular printers. This standard matrix allows the SG-10 to print characters with true descenders and better clarity. Its graphics matrix is 60x72, 120x144, and 240x144. A 2K (6K optional) print buffer is built in.

The SG-10 supports various fonts such as elite, pica, proportional, and condensed. Fonts can be printed in italics or expanded. It also has a near letter quality mode that prints out clean and crisp characters. Underlining, subscripting, and superscripting are also supported along with double strike and emphasized print. As you can tell, the SG-10 has many features going for it, but that's not all.

It can use friction feed paper and has a tractor feed attachment. I find replacing this attachment cumbersome, so I just leave it on and use computer paper. There are also problems in centering and aligning when it comes to using friction feed paper. Keep this in mind if you are thinking of using your own letterheads as the print media.

Graphics can be download on the SG-10. So problems in using printer utilities such as Page Designer, Typesetter, and MegaFont II+ should be few. Be aware that printing out special graphics characters and inverse characters requires special software. You can not just type "LIST P:" and expect these special characters to be transferred to the printer.

The SG-10 has a self-test mode that lets you check that the printer is in working order. The test is initiated by turning on the printer while at the same time depressing the linefeed button. It then prints out its character and graphics sets. All this can be done even if the printer is not connected to your computer.

The SG-10 is rated as having a maximum print speed of 120 CPS but 80 CPS is more realistic. Expect speed to de-

crease dramatically when using the near letter quality mode. It has to make two passes per line which accounts for a slower speed. However, the nice print quality offsets this speed deficiency.

Quality has gone into the SG-10 and it shows. I have moved it around numerous times and have used it for some heavy duty jobs but it has yet to fail on me. The exterior design is pleasant to look at and the control buttons are easily reached, being in the front and on top. The DIP switches are harder to reach which is understandable, since you are not going to make frequent changes anyway.

DIP switches control page length, normal or italic mode, pica or condensed pitch, normal or near letter quality, ignore or enable download characters, paper-out detector, Star or IBM mode, line feed, and buffer. When using the SG-10 with an Atari computer, make sure to set switch 2-3 to OFF (auto line feed with carriage return). Unless this is OFF the printer will not advance the paper after printing a line!

The manual is over 200 pages long but half is taken up by appendices. It contains sections on creating your own characters, printing with dot graphics, line spacing and form control, basic maintenance, etc. Subjects are covered in-depth but an index is not provided which means leafing through many pages to find relevant information. And while it has sections for using the SG-10 with numerous computers and popular programs, it does not even mention Atari.

All in all, I find the Gemini SG-10 to be a value packed printer. It has many features that are required by serious writers and even not so serious ones -- features that are hard to find in this price range. If you are thinking of buying a printer anytime soon, I recommend you look at the SG-10.

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Capital Pro Micro Users

President's Report

January Meeting: The next meeting is scheduled for January 28, 1986, at 6:30 p.m. (the fourth Tuesday of the month). Be aware that the CPM meetings are now held in larger quarters - the MEETING ROOM. There is no meeting scheduled for December owing to the holidays.

At the November meeting, short demonstrations of some of the best in Atari software available for the holiday purchaser were provided. They included: the graphics program Print Shop, the war game Kampgruppe, the data analysis business graphing package B-Graph, Synfile+ database, and the educational game "The Halley Project". The November meeting ended with a raffle, the prizes were the Print Shop, Halley Project, Party Quiz (a trivia game), CopyAll XE/XL, B-Graph, and Synfile+ (128K version).

Membership Dues: Member dues (\$3) for 1986 and the subscription fee (\$12) to CURRENT NOTES are due by December 31, to our treasurer. Please make the Treasurer's duties easier by paying on time. Remember, his is a voluntary position. Mail your \$15 to: Reg Brown, 9325 Bentridge Road, Potomac, Md. - 20854

Elections: The election of new club officers is imminent. This users' group was started less than 18 months ago and now has approximately 65 members. The initial emphasis of this group was upon the experienced user who owned an ATR-8000 (CP/M 2.2). We intend to continue working with the ATR-8000. However, we intend in 1986 to equally emphasize the new Atari 520ST. The reasons for stressing both the 520ST and the ATR-8000 are the extensive number of members who are interested in business applications and the programming experience of many individuals. The real kicker in all this is that CURRENT NOTES reporters at COMDEX (electronics industry trade show, Nov. 20/22) were shown a CP/M emulator program which will permit the 520ST to run CP/M programs. It will be announced in December according to my source. Further, Atari indicated they are working on providing IBM compatibility for the ST soon.

Thus, the selection of officers will be critical to the continued success, expanded interest, and the rapid growth in membership of this users' group. To illustrate this point, I recently received a letter from a former users' group president who said:

"I started the _____ ACE group two years ago when Atari had the big sales. Most of the buyers here were Military and the people selling the Atari knew absolutely nothing about the computer. The purpose of starting the group was to let these people know what they had and how to use it. There just wasn't anyone around for me when I started. Most of the new members were just interested in swapping programs and I didn't care for that a bit. I would get calls all hours of the day and night about 'how do we do this' and I would tell them to bring their

questions to the next meeting as there would be others with the same problems. The predominant answer 'well, I don't think I'll be able to make the meeting. By the way, when is it?' Out of 47 members, we had a core of five that attended the meetings."

We have been fortunate in this users' group (CPM) that most of the local members have attended the meetings and supported the efforts of the club officers. It is now time for some of those less active to give of their time so that others may benefit as they did in the past. I am hoping, as president, that my phone will ring off the hook from those volunteers who wish to devote a few hours to being a club officer for the next year (839-7377).

Library Disks: The CPM library currently consists of 18 CP/M 2.2 disks and all ANALOG disks from issue #20 to #37. Library and ANALOG disks are available for purchase at monthly meetings. The cost of each disk is currently \$3.00 plus \$1.50 shipping for each two (2) disks or fraction thereof ordered by mail. Please allow two weeks for processing mail orders -- especially during the Christmas rush. Mail orders should be addressed to: Dr. Mike Abramowitz, Disk Librarian, 8732 Sleepy Hollow Ln., Potomac, MD. 20854.

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NOVATARI

President's Report

Atarifest. As many of you know, the first "annual" Atarifest was a huge success. I'd like to express my personal thanks to Terry White, Georgia Weatherhead, and Diana Burdt and all the many members who gave so much of their time to help make this such a successful event. Novatari gained 42 new members at the fest and our revenues received a respectable boost from sales of club library disks. I'm already looking forward to the next 'fest in November, 1986!

Local Chapters. In November, the Sterling chapter met for the second time and a new Vienna chapter met for the first time. Both chapters have gotten off to an excellent start. Palmer Pyle (437-3883) is head of the Sterling chapter and Dave Heagy (281-9226) is heading up the Vienna chapter. I also understand that Ray Cwalina (250-3856) is trying to form a chapter in Burke. Anyone interested in any of these chapters should contact the relevant leader. If you would like some help getting a chapter started in your town, call me, Joe Waters, at 450-4761.

SIG Meetings. The new programmer's SIG will meet at 5:00 just before the regular December Novatari main meeting. The Telecom SIG will also meet that same day at 5:30. The ST SIG has decided to hold its meetings on the fourth Sunday of every month starting at 7:30 at the Washington Gas Light Building. If you are interested in the programmer's SIG, contact Ed Seward (960-6360); for the Telecom SIG, contact Dick Smart (425-1574); for the ST SIG, contact Evan Wallace (620-9144).

December Meeting. Our December meeting will be held, as usual, on the second Sunday, December 8. For those of you who missed them at the Atarifest, we will have demos of the new AtariWriter Plus and the Learning Phone Cartridge as well as Atari's Home Planetarium program. Anyone who has programs they would like to demo, should contact Dave Meyer (455-7145) or Dennis McCormick (430-9552).

January Meeting. The January meeting will be held on January 12. Richard Smart has tentatively arranged to have representatives from the SOURCE appear at the January meeting to explain their information service as well as the new, "hopefully," Atari Information Service. (At this writing, a final agreement between Atari and the Source has not yet been signed.)

Elections. We will also provide a slate of candidates for our elective offices at the January meeting. Annual elections will be held at the February meeting. If you have any suggestions for club officers, please let me know as soon as possible. Not only our officers, but many of

the committee chairman would like to step down from office and do some other things for awhile. We need some more volunteers to take their place. How about you?

Membership Renewals. About 140 members will see their membership expire this month. If you are among that group (check your mailing label), you can renew at the December or January meeting. Dues are still set at \$15 for the year, but I don't know how long we will be able to hold that level. If you can't make the meeting, you can send your renewal check (payable to NOVATARI) to Curt Sandler, 7213 Idylwood Court, Falls Church, VA 22043.

NOVATARI Chapters & SIGS

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MEETINGS: 3rd TUE, 5:30 to 8:30PM, Room 543, Nat'l Science Foundation offices, 1800 G St. NW, Wash. DC. The closest subway stop is Farragut West on the Blue and Orange lines. Take the 18th St. exit and walk South on 18th against the flow of traffic for three blocks to G St. The building, on the corner of 18th and G, can be identified by a sign for the Madison National Bank on the corner. Parking is available in the building for a fee. The parking entrance is on the West side of 18th St., between F and G Streets.

NEW MEMBERS: Dues are \$15/yr including a subscription to Current Notes. Send check payable to NCAUG, to Allen Lerman, 14905 Waterway Drive, Rockville, MD 20853.

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| SYSDP/RBBS | FRANK HUBAND | 703/276-8342 |

MEETINGS: Meetings are held each month in the Author Room of the Public Library in Oxon Hill, Md., located near the Woodrow Wilson Bridge just off the Beltway. From Virginia via the Woodrow Wilson Bridge, stay on the Beltway to Maryland Exit #4 West (St. Barnabas Road). St. Barnabas Rd. merges with Oxon Hill Rd. (right turn at end of exit ramp). Proceed 1/4 mile; the library is on your left. The library phone number is 301-839-2400.

NEW MEMBERS: Dues are \$15/year (includes subscription to Current Notes) or \$3/yr (no subscription). Send check, payable to Reg Brown, to him at 9325 Bent Ridge Ad., Potomac, MD 20854.

MORE →

NEW MEMBER INFORMATION

IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO RECEIVE **CURRENT NOTES** AS A MEMBER OF ONE OF THE WASHINGTON AREA ATARI USER GROUPS, FILL OUT THE FORM BELOW (OR A COPY) AND SEND IT TO THE USER GROUP OF YOUR CHOICE. SEE ADJACENT LISTINGS FOR MEMBERSHIP FEES AND MAILING INFORMATION. IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO SUBSCRIBE DIRECTLY TO **CURRENT NOTES**, SEND A CHECK FOR \$15.00, PAYABLE TO CURRENT NOTES, TO JOE WATERS, 122 N. JOHNSON ROAD, STERLING, VA 22170.

WASHINGTON AREA ATARI COMPUTER ENTHUSIASTS SUBSCRIPTION/MEMBERSHIP FORM

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WASHINGTON AREA ATARI COMPUTER ENTHUSIASTS

AURA ATARI USERS' REGIONAL ASSOCIATION

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| VICE PRES. | JOHN BARNES | 652-0667 |
| TREASURER | RICHARD STOLL | 446-8435 |
| CORR. SECY. | BRUCE MCLENDON | 587-7890 |
| MEMBERSHIP | WILLIAM PIMBLE | 341-9572 |
| LIBRARIAN | WILLIAM SCHAOT | 622-1547 |
| HARDWARE CORD. | MOE SHERMAN | 593-1076 |

MEETINGS: 1st Thursday of every month, 7PM, Wheaton Library, 11701 Georgia Ave., Wheaton, MD.

NEW MEMBERS: Dues are \$15/year; includes subscription to Current Notes. Mail check, payable to AURA, to Treasurer, AURA, POB 7761, Silver Spring, MD 20907.

FACE FREDERICK ATARI COMPUTER ENTHUSIASTS

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| PRESIDENT | MIKE KERWIN | 301/845-4477 |
| VICE PRES | BILL AUSTIN | 304/263-1867 |
| TREASURER | BUDDY SMALLWOOD | 301/432-6863 |
| LIBRARIAN | BOB MARTIN | 301/848-7619 |
| SECRETARY | JOHN MASCHMEIER | 301/271-2470 |
| SVSOP | SAM YU | 301/662-5586 |
| 885 | | 301/644-8483 |

MEETINGS: Fourth Tuesday of each month, 7:00PM to 9:30PM, Walkersville High School, MD Route 194, one mile North of MD Route 26 (Liberty Road).

NEW MEMBERS: Dues \$20 yearly per family; includes subscription to Current Notes. Send check, payable to FACE, to Buddy Smallwood, POB 300, Keedysville, MD 21756.

SMAUG SOUTHERN MARYLAND ATARI USERS' GROUP

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| PRESIDENT | SAM SCHRINAR | 301/843-7916 |
| SECRETARY | DOROTHY LEONARDI | 301/834-1363 |
| TREASURER | BOB BARNETT | 301/434-2617 |
| DISK LIB. | JIM SANNER | 301/884-5840 |

MEETINGS: 7:30PM on the second Thursday of each month at the John Hanson Middle School in Waldorf, MD. Take MD Route #5. Proceed about 1/2 mile East of the intersection of Route 301 and take first left past the Kinney shoe store to the school.

NEW MEMBERS: Dues are \$15.00/yr, including subscription to Current Notes. Mail check, payable to SMAUG, to Bob Barnett, P.O. Box 612, Waldorf, MD 20601.

NOVATARI NORTHERN VIRGINIA ATARI COMPUTER USERS' GROUP

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| PRESIDENT | JOE WATERS | 703/450-4761 |
| VICE PRES | JIM STEVENSON | 703/378-4093 |
| TREASURER | CURTIS SANDLER | 703/734-4533 |
| SECRETARY | GEORGIA WEATHERHEAD | 703/438-4829 |
| PUBLICITY | TERRY WHITE | 703/560-7726 |
| MEMB/SHIP | EARL LILLEY | 703/281-4017 |
| PROGRAMS | DAVE MEYER | 703/455-7145 |
| DEMOS | DENNIS MCCORMICK | 703/430-4552 |
| SEMINARS | DONNA YARBROUGH | 703/255-3467 |
| EDUCATION | DIANA BURDT | 703/425-5073 |
| DISK LIB. | M. EVAN BROOKS | 703/354-4482 |

MEETINGS: 2nd Sunday of each month, 5:30 to 8:30PM, in the large Auditorium at the Wash. Gas Light Bldg., 6801 Industrial Rd., Ad., Springfield, VA. From the Northwest: Beltway (I495) to East on Braddock (620); to South on Backlick (617). From the Northeast: Shirley Highway (I395) to West on Edsall Road (648) to South on Backlick. Take a left at the light by Industrial Rd. Washington Gas Light is the second bldg. on the right.

NEW MEMBERS: Dues are \$15/year, including subscription to Current Notes. Send check, payable to NOVATARI, to Curtis Sandler, 7213 Idylwood Court, Falls Church, VA 22043.

MACUG WOODBRIDGE ATARI COMPUTER USERS' GROUP

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| FIRST VP | DAVE MARRANDETTE | 703/670-7675 |
| VP-EDUCATION | TIM MITCHELL | 703/221-7722 |
| VP-LIAISON | CECIL ALTON | 703/670-4842 |
| SECRETARY | MIKE STRINGER | 703/786-8755 |
| TREASURER | CURT PIERITZ | 703/444-3704 |
| LIBRARIAN | ARNIE TURK | 703/670-2547 |

MEETINGS: Monthly, 7-10PM, usually on 3rd TUE, in the Community Room, Potomac Branch, Prince William County Library, Opitz Blvd., Woodbridge, VA. Exact dates: OCT 15, NOV 26 (4th TUE), DEC 17, JAN 21, FEB 18, MAR 17 (3rd MON), APR 15, MAY 20, JUN 17. Entering Woodbridge from either the North or South on Route #1, proceed to the intersection of RT #1 and Opitz Blvd. (adjacent to Woodbridge Lincoln-Mercury). Turn West on Opitz and take the first left turn into the library's parking lot. The Community Room is located to your left immediately upon entering the main building.

NEW MEMBERS: Fee is \$10/per yr plus \$1.00 monthly dues; includes subscription to Current Notes for members in good standing. Send checks, payable to MACUG, to Mike Stringer, 709 Rutherford Drive, Fredericksburg, VA 22401.

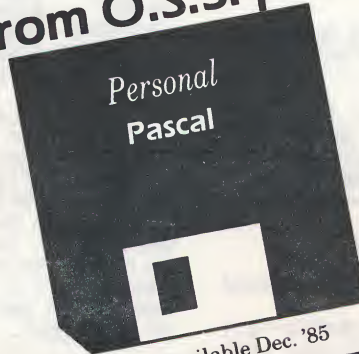
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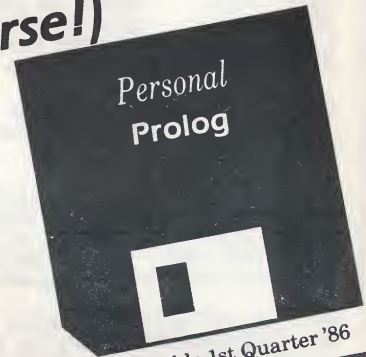
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